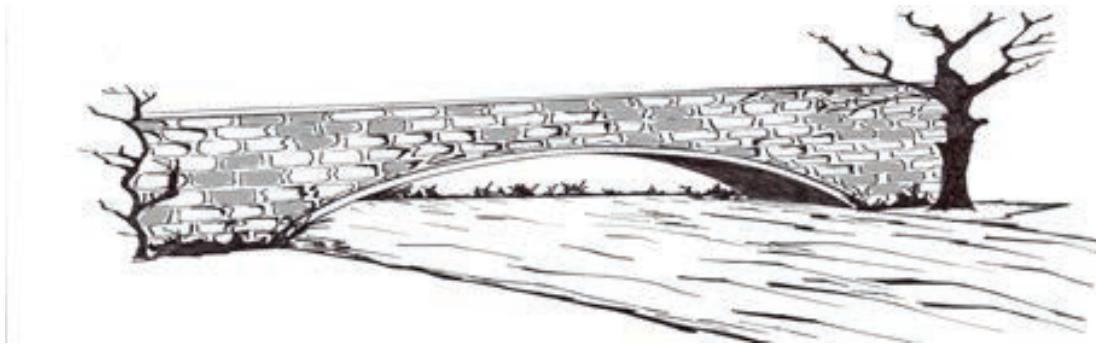


*2014*

# Town of Hounsfield Comprehensive Plan





*Cover Images (L to R): scenic Black River, Horse Island Lighthouse, Stokes Family photo (date unknown), Sackets Harbor Fire Dept #2 Fire Hall.*

# Hounsfield Vision Statement

Hounsfield and Sackets Harbor will be a diverse community with a shared sense of place and balanced, dynamic growth and economic development through preservation, education and management of its unique natural, historic, cultural, agricultural and human resources.

—July 30, 2002

## Hounsfield Officials

**Timothy Scee**  
*Town Supervisor*

**David Renzi**  
*Town Attorney*

**Stephen Lee, Deputy Supervisor**  
**Todd Farrington**  
**Carson Lennox**  
**Dick Young**  
*Council Members*

**John Condino**  
*Town Engineer*

**Dr. Charles Moehs**  
*Town Health Officer*

**Peter Bryant**  
*Economic Development Director*

**Jeannie Brennan**  
*Town Historian*

**Diane Nier**  
*Town Clerk/Tax Collector*

**Marlene Lennox**  
*Zoning Officer*

**Maryann Yuhas**  
*Town Accountant*

## The Comprehensive Planning Committee

### Steering Committee

Christine Eggleston, *Committee Chair, Chairperson, Board of Appeals*  
Timothy Scee, *Town Supervisor*  
Stephen Lee, *Deputy Town Supervisor*  
Marlene Lennox, *Town Zoning Officer*  
Sharry Rogers, *Community member-at-large*  
Steve Sullivan, *Sackets Harbor Fire Department*  
Dave Altieri, *Heritage Area Director*

### Community Participants

Diane Nier, *Town Clerk*  
Yvonne Podvin, *Chairperson, Town Planning Board*  
Barbara Boulton, *Village Trustee*  
Anita Prather Harvell, *Community member-at-large*  
Kevin Smith, *Community member-at-large*  
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Prepared by:



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## Introduction

The Town of Hounsfield Comprehensive Plan, constructed from public outreach and engagement to develop a vision for the Town and the community, is intended to serve as a guide for the Town as we continue to grow. The true value in creating this ‘living document’ is that it will be the benchmark for the Town over the next several years, allowing us to revisit our recommendations and to have a clear and consistent path forward that will benefit everyone in Hounsfield and the Village of Sackets Harbor. The Comprehensive Plan is a tool for planning and understanding our township’s role and value in broader regional economic development, which will assist in attracting new investment and help local government officials manage responsible development in Hounsfield.

This document includes the history of the Town, demographic data, and information garnered from a community survey and a visioning forum, with highlights from the North Country Regional Strategy of 2012 as a basis for understanding the forces that have shaped, and continue to shape, the character of Hounsfield. The survey and visioning forums focused what residents defined as most relevant and valued in our community, and provided the informed development of this plan. Residents shared their ideas and enthusiasms for what is needed to plan and manage future growth, while keeping true to our historic character and natural, rural setting.

The plan is broken into five segments. It opens with Section One describing the physical, cultural and economic context of the North Country, followed by Section Two outlining the Town’s history. Section Three describes the Town’s demographics and Section Four includes information gathered from community input. Finally, in Section Five, the Recommendations and Action Strategy developed by the Comprehensive Planning Committee are presented for implementation.

Last, but definitely not least, this plan would not have come together without the dedicated work of the residents and community members who shared ideas, opinions, and energy so graciously and generously with us. We appreciate their candor in pointing out strengths and weaknesses, and for their commitment to the notion that what a community values most is reflected in its planning and management. Further, we are most grateful for the guidance and technical assistance provided by the Environmental Finance Center at Syracuse University, who helped frame and focus the information into a document that will serve our community well.

Christine Eggleston, Committee Chairperson



## Hounsfield

Rolling hills, vistas and limestone waterfront cliffs characterize the town of Hounsfield. Known today for its natural beauty and opportunities for cultural tourism related to its connection to the historic War of 1812, the 27,291-acre town located east of Lake Ontario, in Jefferson County, was once famous for dairy farming and cheese factories. Water is one of the town's key features. Hounsfield lies in the center of the western boundary of Jefferson County, and is bounded north and west by the Black River and by Black River Bay and Henderson Bay, thus touching the waters of Lake Ontario. With Mill Creek flowing through its center, the town includes the Galloo Islands (one more than 2,000 acres and the other about 48), Stony Island (some 1,500 acres), and Calf Island (some 34 acres).

To Hounsfield's north lies the town of Brownville, to the east, the town of Watertown, and to the south, Adams and Henderson. Nestled within the town's western boundary is the village of Sackets Harbor, which housed the military and naval headquarters for the US Northern frontier during the War of 1812. East Hounsfield and Sackets Harbor are the only centers of population within its borders, though Dexter and Brownville are on its borders. Camp's Mills was once a hamlet.

## North Country

The North Country of New York spans an area of 11,420 square miles from the eastern shore of Lake Ontario to the western edge of Lake Champlain and from the shared border with Canada in the north to the southern end of Hamilton County. While Watertown, Plattsburgh and Ogdensburg are the major small cities in the region, manufacturing, farming, education and ecotourism can be found in many of the villages, towns and hamlets dotting the seven-county region.

The North Country is home to 238 communities (including towns, villages, cities and unincorporated hamlets) with populations ranging from the approximately 125 year-round residents on Wellesley Island on the St. Lawrence River, to 27,023 residents in the City of Watertown (2010 Census). Unlike other regions in the State, the North Country does not include a major population center or dominant metropolitan city. Rather, communities scattered

throughout the region such as Canton, Lake Placid, Massena, Lowville, Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake and Watertown, serve as micropolitan hubs of population, culture, industry and commerce, offering many of the business attractions and community amenities of their larger counterparts. However, diverse and vibrant manufacturing, farming, education, ecotourism and retail activities can be found in many of the North Country's villages, towns and hamlets. The St. Lawrence River, a major shipping corridor to the Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces, also provides recreational opportunities for boaters, anglers and beachgoers in addition to serving as a resource for one of New York's major hydroelectric facilities—St. Lawrence-Franklin D. Roosevelt Power Project.

Proximity to the border with Canada has led many firms to set up operations in the North Country. New businesses, including biotech, aerospace and advanced material manufacturing firms with established facilities in the North Country also have working relationships with the 10 colleges and universities and medical facilities throughout the region.

## Natural Features

The region is recognized for four natural features: the Adirondack Park, the 1000 Islands/St. Lawrence River, Lake Champlain, and Tug Hill Plateau.

### The Adirondack Park

The Adirondack Park is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States. Approximately six (6) million acres in size, the Park is comparable in size to the entire State of Vermont.

Forty-eight percent of the land inside the Adirondack



*The Thousand Islands Bridge crosses the St. Lawrence River, connecting northern New York with Canada*

## *Town of Hounsfield*

Park belongs to the people of New York and is constitutionally protected to remain a “forever wild” forest preserve. The remaining 52% is private land that includes homes, businesses and farms, and timber lands.

The Adirondack Park is home to Lake Placid; the only community in the State to twice host the Winter Olympic Games (1932 and 1980). Olympic facilities include downhill skiing at Whiteface Mountain, which has a vertical drop of 3,430 feet; the greatest vertical drop east of the Rockies. Continued investments in Lake Placid’s Olympic training facilities have allowed the region to remain at the forefront for national and international sports training and competitions.

### **The St. Lawrence River**

The St. Lawrence River flows along the northern shore of the region and serves as a critical recreation, transportation and hydropower resource. Flowing between the shores of New York and the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the river is home to the 1000 Islands vacation destination and serves as the shipping corridor for vessels traveling between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean.

As a managed river, the St. Lawrence also generates hydropower at a facility in Massena, producing more than 900,000 kilowatts of electricity annually.

### **Tug Hill Plateau**

Situated between Lake Ontario and the Adirondacks, the Tug Hill Plateau encompasses roughly 2,000 square miles, and includes areas of Jefferson and Lewis Counties. The Tug Hill Plateau’s elevation and position with respect to Lake Ontario results in an average annual snowfall in excess of 200 inches. Due to this dramatic winter weather, the Tug Hill Plateau is a popular snowmobiling destination and offers an extensive seasonal trail system. Tug Hill’s proximity to Lake Ontario has also created contiguous areas of Class 3 winds, and has led to the development of the Maple Ridge wind farm, the largest commercial wind project in New York State.

## **Economy**

The North Country is the least populous part of the State with 433,193 residents, and has the lowest population density of any other part of the State.

Despite its small population base, the region remains a desirable area to settle. The region has experienced a nearly 2% increase in population since 2000 when many other regions of New York lost population or had population growth that remained flat. In 2009, residents between the ages of 5 and 19 years old represented the largest age cohort in the region. The region benefits from a fairly high influx of young adults to both Fort Drum and to its ten colleges and universities.

### **A Resilient Local Economy**

The presence of a strong agricultural base and the highest per capita number of small businesses in the State has helped make the region somewhat resistant to the economic turmoil that has gripped much of the rest of the State and the country in recent years. However, American Community Survey (ACS) data for the region also reveals that:

- Average household income is \$54,318, the lowest of all regions in the State;
- Per capita income is \$21,211 – the lowest of all regions in the State at 69% of the per capita income for New York State as a whole (\$30,634);
- 14.8% of the population (58,181) lives below the poverty level, the third highest regional figure in the State, following the Southern Tier (14.9%) and New York City (18.6%).

### **Cost of living**

However the aggregate income of the region remains high relative to the opportunity to spend it and, in general, the cost of living compared to many other regions in the State remains low. The average median existing home purchase price within the region (\$116,400) is about \$100,000 less than the statewide median. Likewise, four counties in the region ranked in the top 10 for having the lowest per capita tax collection rates in the State.

## **Infrastructure**

### **Broadband**

Broadband access is generally available in population centers, but less so in rural areas.

In 2011, the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) received federal funding to provide redundancy to its open-access telecom

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network (OATN) from Lowville to Utica and back to Syracuse, and to extend the existing network to Franklin, Clinton and Essex Counties. When complete, the OATN will consist of more than 1,000 miles of fiber network backbone and will include 19 office locations. Last mile build-outs on this backbone are being done by a variety of broadband service providers. Despite the existing network, broadband availability remains an impediment for many less populated areas.

### Transportation

The North Country, with its more than 11,420 square miles of land, is a vast area in which to live and conduct business. Due to its location at the northern edge of the State and its rural nature, extensive travel is required to conduct daily business.

### Roads

Currently, the region's existing road network is one of the most heavily used transportation systems in New York. US Highway 11 bisects the region, traveling southwest to northeast through four of the seven North Country counties (Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin and Clinton). Two north-south Interstate corridors exist on the western and eastern edges of the region. Interstate 81 travels through Jefferson County, and terminates at the 1,000 Islands International Bridge, which crosses the St. Lawrence River into Canada. Interstate 87 travels through Clinton and Essex Counties and terminates at the Canadian Border at the Champlain/LaColle Border Crossing with Province of Quebec. I-81 and I-87 are major bi-national transportation corridors. Additionally, there are two underutilized bridge crossings into eastern Ontario near the Village of Massena and the City of Ogdensburg.

### Connection to Canada

The importance of these crossings and the existing levels of and potential expansion of foreign trade to Canada cannot be overemphasized:

- Canada is the largest export destination for New York State's manufactured goods. In fact, Quebec's largest trading partner is New York.
- The North Country represents the gateway for exporting goods to Canada: five of the six larger international border crossings in New York State are located in the North Country (Alexandria

Bay, Champlain, Massena, Ogdensburg, and Trout River/Ft Covington/ Chateaugay).

- Of the 81 northern border crossings in the US, ports in Alexandria Bay and Champlain ranked in the top 10 in the nation for truck traffic entering the U.S. in 2010.
- All areas of Clinton, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties are designated as Foreign Trade Zones, which among other things, can exempt goods and merchandise from duty payments until they are sold in the US market.

The region is geographically well-positioned to provide the necessary logistics associated with commerce and to provide for appropriate business opportunities for businesses trading on both sides of the border. Maintaining border fluidity is of paramount importance to the region and the State as a whole.

Regionally, the border is much more than just a trade corridor: it is also an opportunity for investment, for obtaining services and is a major gateway for tourism. The region's Canadian neighbors have long been welcome participants in the region's business; have taken advantage of services more easily obtained on the New York side of the border and have long been attracted to the world-class amenities and attractions in the region. Likewise, US residents have often availed themselves of the ultra-urban amenities of Montreal and Ottawa, have utilized Montreal and Toronto as a gateway for inter-continental air travel and have long-enjoyed the freedom to travel to Canada for recreational and cultural opportunities.



*George Lee house (built 1834) on the west side of the Bagg's Corners-Camp's Mills road.*



### Scenic Byways

As a result of the region's scenic beauty, 10 of the State's 22 designated scenic byways are located in the North Country, more than any other region in the State. These Scenic Byways are promoted to attract tourists, and they are successful: the Great Lakes Seaway Trail reported almost 2,600 persons visited their Discovery Center in Sackets Harbor during 2010, while the Adirondack North Country Association's Scenic Byways web site averages more than 3,000 visitors per month.

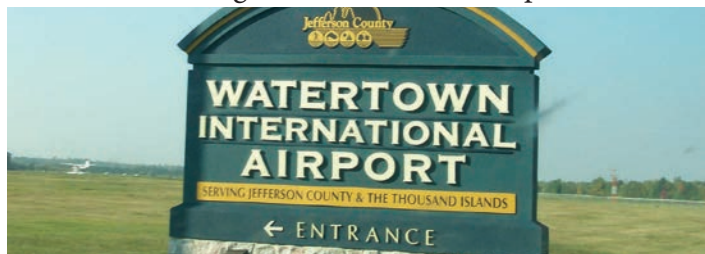
But, as important as tourism is to local economies, Scenic Byways provide communities with important tools to plan for the management and development of their assets and resources; such planning has benefits for local residents and businesses, as well as for visitors. NYS DOT reports the State received more than \$21 million in federal funds for such Corridor Management Plans.

### Airports

Air travel to the region is appealing due to its expediency; four-hour road trips can be flown in 60 minutes.

Watertown International Airport is a county-owned, public use airport mostly used for general aviation, but has grown and developed to include scheduled passenger service. The airport is available as an international port of entry for private aircraft. The airport's passenger boardings have risen from about 500 in 2008 to about 2200 in 2010, just short of being listed as a commercial service airport. The airport recently underwent renovations and improvements to accommodate ongoing growth.

However, commercial air travel is just one aspect of the potential of air service in the region. Fort Drum has an active airfield. Also of significance is the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base that now serves as the Plattsburgh International Airport and has



*The Watertown International Airport in Hounsfield covers 1,060 acres and while it is mainly used for general aviation, commercial passenger service is also provided.*

become known as Montreal's US Airport. Plattsburgh International has an industrial park with intermodal connections not only to the interstate road system (I-87) but also to both US and Canadian rail networks.

### Water Transport

The St. Lawrence Seaway provides the markets of the major northeastern cities and the Central Plains states with convenient access to ships traveling to and from international ports. Further, the Seaway directly serves Ontario and Quebec to the north, and Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York and Pennsylvania to the south. Annual commerce on the system exceeds 180 million metric tons. Nearly 25% of the cargo on the Seaway travels to and from overseas ports.

### Renewable Energy

The future economy will be dependent upon affordable, reliable and renewable energy and the North Country is already a proven leader in these areas. In total, more than 50% of the State's installed wind generation is within the region. With a deepwater port, available land, rural development patterns and the infrastructure required to transport power already in place, the region is poised to take advantage of wind's potential. Wind is but one of many exciting green power possibilities. Low-impact hydropower has enjoyed a long and productive history in the region dating back to the use of water powered mills utilized in mineral, wood, fabric and grain processing. That tradition has been translated into electrical power generation and is well established within the region; it yields more than 2,200 MW of reliable, low cost, renewable and low-impact energy benefits distributed to the grid.

While wind and hydropower provide an excellent starting point, it is the region's potential to generate renewable biomass for conversion to fuel that holds the most promise. Given existing resources and underutilized land, the biomass potential in this region is unparalleled in the State.

Traditional power resources and transmission systems are well established throughout the region. Natural gas is available in most of the region's population centers and three of New York State's major import/export exchange points for natural gas are located within the region, proximate to

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the Canadian border in Champlain, Massena and Waddington. Most portions of the region not serviced with natural gas utilize either fuel oil or LP gas for heating purposes.

### Institutions of Higher Learning

Ten post-secondary schools are located in the North Country and serve as vital resources in attracting new residents and developing a talented workforce to strengthen the region's economy. Total enrollment in these schools exceeds 29,000 and represents nearly 7% of the region's total population.

Two-year, four-year, and advanced degrees are offered at these institutions, seven of which have received national or regional recognition for quality of instruction, research and development, and specialized curricula.

The region's higher education providers overlap very little in terms of course and degree offerings, and therefore work collaboratively to maximize the educational experiences for their students and their institutional impact on the communities.

### Agriculture for Food and Biomass

Agriculture has a long tradition in the North Country and a promising future. Agriculture has historically maintained a fairly steady status in terms of employment and relative importance in the economy. If the region is at risk at all, it is in the relative lack of value-added processing of its agricultural production. This lack also represents an opportunity. The advent of greater consumer awareness of product quality, selectivity toward organic production and greater-than-ever diversification of the sector all bode well for the long-term future of agriculture within the region. With the identified potential for biomass conversion in the energy sector, underutilized land and wood resources could play a prominent and renewable role in further invigorating this sector. Regionally:

- In 2007, there were 4,288 farms in the region, which represent 15% of all farmland in New York State;
- The market value of farm products sold in the North Country exceeded \$596 million in 2007, and accounted for 13% of the total market value in the State;
- In 2008, New York ranked 4th in the nation

in number of organic farms. 13% of the State's organic farms (144) are in the North Country;

- In 2008, 20% of all the milk produced in the State came from the North Country;
- New York ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation, behind Vermont, in maple production. The North Country ranks in 1<sup>st</sup> in the State for number of maple producers, and accounts for 37% of all maple syrup produced in New York in 2010;
- Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties traditionally rank in the top 10 in the state for number of cattle, number of milk cows, gallons of milk produced, and acres used for hay and corn production;
- Compared to the volume of agricultural products produced in the region, most, if not all, of the dairy produced in the North Country, is exported outside the region for processing. Only 42 food manufacturing firms were present in the North Country in 2010. A majority of these firms (61%) were located in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties; and
- The region's farming industry has an opportunity to maximize direct marketing sales to local consumers, institutions and businesses. In 2009, 847 farms in the North Country (including Warren County), engaged in direct and wholesale marketing, which represents
- 19% of total farm operations in the region. While the number of farms engaging in direct marketing sales to consumers grew by 34% since 2000, the number of farms in the region selling wholesale remained unchanged.



*The Galloo Island Lighthouse, constructed in 1820.*



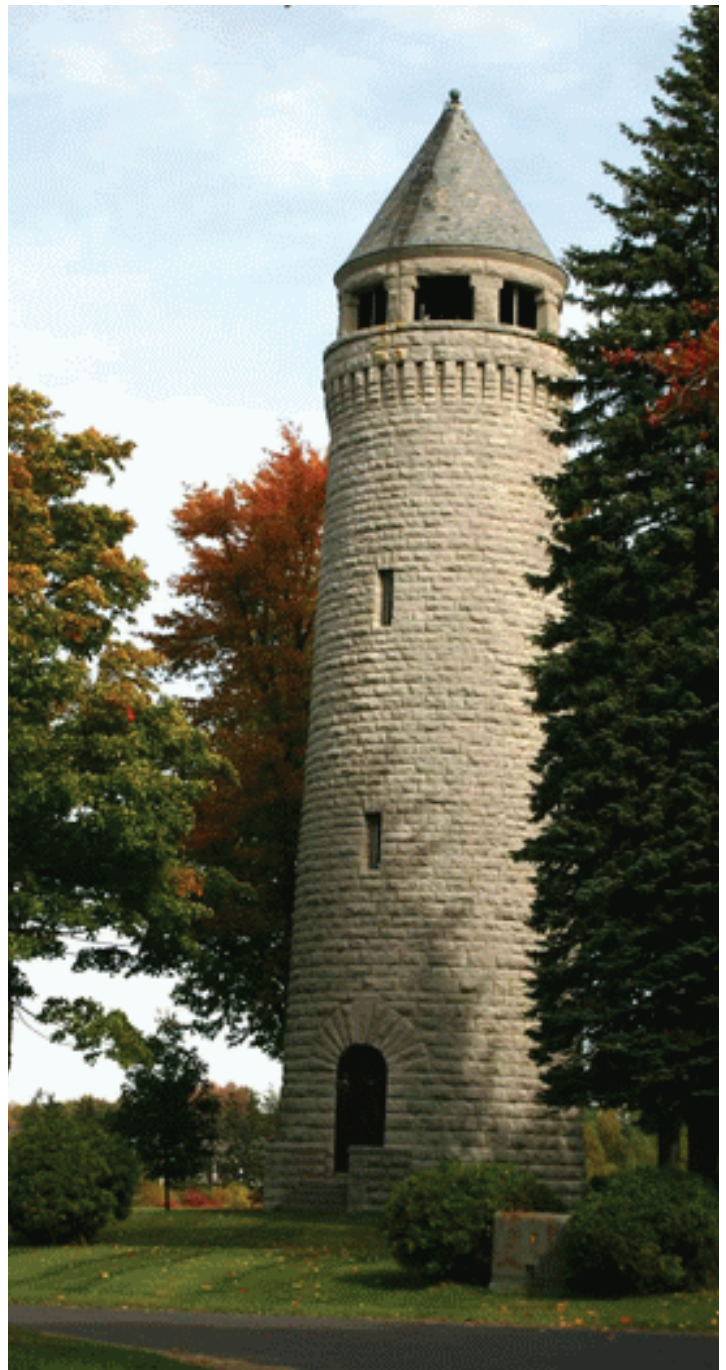
## Housing

Housing represents a major part of the infrastructure of the North Country. The seven counties in the region contain 216,041 housing units (ACS, 2005-09). Individual homes in the North Country are affordable, compared to New York State as a whole. In 2009, median values for housing units ranged from \$76,800 in St. Lawrence County to more than \$170,000 in Hamilton County; this is compared to a statewide median value of more than \$300,000 (ACS). Similarly, the NYS Association of Realtors reported that home sale prices in 2010 in the North Country ranged from a median price of \$81,000 in St. Lawrence County to \$147,000 in Essex County; this is compared to a statewide median sales price of \$215,000 (data for Hamilton County were not reported). The relative affordability of housing in the region provides a significant incentive to attract new residents.

While housing is an integral part of the North Country's built environment, it faces problems similar to those faced by other sectors of the region's infrastructure: the need for maintenance for aging systems, the cost of replacing or upgrading systems, and investment in new units. More than half of housing units in the North Country were constructed before 1950. Like other sectors of older infrastructure, these houses require frequent repairs, and often benefit from major reinvestment in primary systems (roofs, heating systems, electrical upgrades, plumbing, modernization of kitchens and baths, etc.).

Unfortunately, many people in the North Country have lower incomes, and find it difficult to afford the cost of maintenance and reinvestment. Additionally, current HUD data indicate that almost half (43.8%) the population in the region has Low or Moderate Incomes (LMI), and thus qualify for HUD assistance.

Costs associated with recent housing rehabilitation activities conducted to benefit LMI households in the North Country demonstrate how deferred maintenance can result in very large repair costs: as an example, the Housing Assistance Program of Essex County, Inc. reported spending an average of \$16,138 per housing unit to restore units to HUD's Housing Quality Standard (HQS). New construction in the North Country has had a negligible effect on



*Historic Lookout Tower in Madison Barracks.*

increasing or improving housing stock. The Census Bureau (ACS) reports that during the period 2005-09 only 2,504 units were built in the entire region. This amounted to just 1.1% of the region's total housing stock; 44% of these new units were built in Jefferson County, in an attempt to provide sufficient housing to meet the needs of soldiers assigned to Fort Drum.

Lower-income households may opt to purchase a home in the North Country through participation in a homeownership assistance program, through

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which eligible applicants may receive mortgage-buy-down assistance, help with closing costs, and some limited repairs. Given the relative affordability of North Country homes, these programs have been an effective way to assist households to obtain permanent housing, and to keep moderately-priced homes occupied. During the past five years (2006-10), the NYS Office of Community Renewal has invested more than \$6.7 million for homeownership assistance in the North Country.

### Fort Drum

Fort Drum is the single largest employer in Upstate New York. At the end of Federal fiscal year 2010, the soldier population at Fort Drum was 19,447 and civilian employment was 4,826. The total direct economic output to the North Country when considering direct expenditures, indirect expenditures, and induced expenditures, is calculated to be in excess of \$2.2 billion. Approximately 54% of soldiers have dependents. Of that number 3,670 (35%) live in base housing; the remainder live in communities around Fort Drum. An estimated 1,100 single soldiers not assigned to the barracks also live in various communities.

Military personnel and spouses enhance the skilled workforce in our region, and they bring a cultural diversity to the area, resulting in an enhanced quality of life to area residents. The many school-age dependent children attend area schools. Both soldiers and their dependents use community resources for such medical requirements. These families are truly integrated into the North Country fabric of life.

Programs such as the proposed Homeward Bound initiative can provide added support for the defense cluster and for the soldiers' families.

### Business Inventory

In 2010, there were 9,633 private businesses operating in the North Country.

Since 2000, the construction industry added 128 new businesses, and the Health Care industry added 72 new firms to the region. Both of these sectors gained more businesses than any other industries in the North Country.

### 2010 Businesses by Industry

- Retail Trade: 18%

- Accommodation and Food Services: 12%
- Construction: 11%
- Health Care and Social Assistance: 11%
- Other Services: 10%
- Finance and Insurance: 4%
- Real Estate, Rental and Leasing: 4%
- Manufacturing: 4%
- Administration and Waste Services: 3%
- Transportation and Warehousing: 3%
- Wholesale Trade: 3%
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation: 3%
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting: 2%
- Information: 2%
- Educational Services: 1%

### Current Employment Trends by Industry Sector

In 2010, there were 10,473 public and private businesses in the North Country with 151,041 employees earning an average wage of \$36,609. On average, private businesses employed 11 workers each.

Small businesses are a vital component of the North Country's economy. In 2010, nearly half (49%) of all private industries in the North Country (4,721 firms) consisted of businesses with 10 or fewer workers.

The region's largest industry was construction, with 1,053 firms employing 5,995 persons. With an average of six employees per firm, construction paid the highest wage compared to any other small business industry. The industry with the region's second largest number of small businesses was Other Services (such as repair and maintenance, hair salons and spas, dry cleaning, professional consultants, and non-profit organizations) at 998 firms. On average, each of these businesses employed five workers and paid an average of \$21,905 per employee.

The top five industries with 11 or more employees per business were education, manufacturing, management, health care, and utilities. Personnel earning the highest average salaries worked for utility or manufacturing companies.

Since 2005, industries that have hired the most employees are health care; retail trade; accommodation and food services; agriculture, forestry, and fishing; and construction. During that same time period, more than 3,000 jobs were



lost in the manufacturing industry—the largest loss compared to any other industry in the region.

### Fastest Growing Occupations

The New York State Department of Labor has identified occupations that have “Very Favorable, Favorable, Unfavorable, and Very Unfavorable” outlooks in the North Country through 2018.

- Health care, aviation, education and personal services top the “Very Favorable” occupations in the North Country that require post-secondary education and training. 3,790 new positions are anticipated to be created in the health care industry. More than a quarter of these jobs will be in ambulatory and health care services and in nursing and residential care facilities
- 1,660 new positions are anticipated to be created in the education industry and 920 more jobs will be created through the accommodation and food services industry.

*\*Note: This section was compiled using excerpted material from the North Country Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan, November 2011.*

## History

*\*Note: Because the comprehensive plan is for the town outside the Village, the following history focuses on the history of the town outside the Village.*

In 1800, Amasa Fox started the first settlement in the northern part of what is now the Town of Hounsfield, near Muskellunge Bay. Early settlers reportedly found the remains of an old Indian burial ground and a fortification constructed of bricks. Augustus Sacket was the first to settle the present village of Sackets Harbor in 1801. He brought a small company of employees and immediately began making improvements, including the first sawmill and one of the most pretentious houses in the area for himself. Another prominent early settler of the village was Elisha Camp, who came to the harbor in 1804, equipped for the practice of law. He was instrumental in the development of many of the early, significant public and private enterprises, such as the Christ Episcopal Church, Sackets Harbor Bank, and the railroad. In 1811 he organized an artillery company, and was an important factor in the success of the American effort in the War of 1812.

Other early settlers of the town outside the village of Sackets Harbor include Theron Hinman, Stephen Simmons, Loren Buss, Joseph Landon, Jotham Wilder, John Patrick, Hezekiah Doolittle, Josiah McWayne, Jeremiah Goodrich, Samuel Bates, William Waring, Elijah Field, Palmer Westcott, Ebenezer Allen, and the five Robbins brothers. The Town of Hounsfield was officially formed on February 17, 1806 from the Town of Watertown. It was named in honor of Ezra Hounsfield, a businessman from England, who was one of the early owners of the land that later became the town.

One of the reasons for the establishment of the town was the perceived neglect in developing roads west of Watertown. The military and commercial importance of the port at Sackets Harbor before the War of 1812 spurred road construction. The first state road was built through the town in 1808, from Brownsville to Rome. The first school was also built that year, near Muskellunge Bay. In 1813 another road was built connecting Sackets Harbor and Rome.



*Samuel Resseguie Farm on Parker Road, built around 1840.*



*School house #5 in Hounsfield.*

Hounsfield is best known for its historical connection with the War of 1812, a battle of which was fought at Sackets Harbor, one of the best known Great Lakes ports of its day. Madison Barracks, still standing, were built of stone to house troops during the war. The barracks were the center of operations during the embargo period and during the war. The war had a significant impact on the town. While the direct impact was primarily felt in the village, the battle and military operations adversely affected an estimated four-fifths of the residents of the town outside the village. Most of these residents were farmers, who saw significant disruptions to their crops.

Following the War of 1812, there was enormous commercial development in the town with a number and variety of mills and small factories, as well as hotels and taverns. A military road intended to connect Madison Barracks at Sackets Harbor with the barracks at Plattsburg was started in 1817, but was never completed. In 1848, the first plank road was constructed from Sackets Harbor to Watertown. This later became part of a transcontinental highway known in the early 20th century as Theodore Roosevelt International Highway and later as New York State Route 3. Parts of it are now recognized as scenic byways.

To provide additional water power for mills, a four-foot deep canal (20 feet wide at the top and 12 feet wide at the bottom) was dug from Huntington's Mills (two miles above the village of Watertown) to Sackets Harbor. The canal never fulfilled the goals of its developers and was soon abandoned. By the mid-19th century, the area near the Samuel Guthrie House along

Mill Creek, then known as Jewetsville, contained three brickyards, a limekiln, a woolen mill, bakery, a large brewery, several asheries, four or five distilleries, a malt house, a tannery, a gunsmith shop, a glove factory, two cooper shops, a wheelwright shop, a rope factory, three vinegar factories, and several other businesses. Also in that area were Dr. Samuel Guthrie's powder mill and laboratory, where he developed the first percussion gun cap and the anesthetic use of chloroform.

The 1850's saw the first telegraph line, railroad and post office in the town. Several churches were also established during the mid-19th century, including the Christian Church in East Hounsfield, a Roman Catholic Church in northeast Hounsfield and the Methodist-Episcopal Church in Sulphur Springs. By the 1860s, the population of the town peaked and began a steady decline. This may have been caused by the decreasing significance of the port and declining military activity at Madison Barracks at Sackets Harbor. However, business in the town continued to thrive into the early 20th century.

## Hounsfield Demographics

### 1.1 Demographic Information Background and Sources:

The following demographic information was taken from ACS 2006 – 2010 5-year estimate data, ACS 2007 – 2011 5-year estimate data, and Cornell PAD projections, accessed November 7, 2012. The highlights of this data were selected for narrative. Full demographic charts and graphs can be found in Appendix E.

### 1.2 Demographic Information Highlights



*Purpura Corners Schoolhouse.*



## Town of Hounsfield

Total population for the Town of Hounsfield is 3,384; 1,370 people (40.5%) live in the Village of Sackets Harbor while 2,014 people (59.5%) live in the remaining Town of Hounsfield. Population projections for Jefferson County predict a 12.4% increase from 2010 to 2040, which would result in a population of 3,804 for the town of Hounsfield in 2040.

Population density for the Village of Sackets Harbor is 621.4 people per square mile while population density for the Town of Hounsfield is 43.7 people per square mile. Total land in the village equates to 2.21 square miles and in the town equates to 49.68 square miles.

Age distribution for Hounsfield follows a standard bell curve, which peaks with 535 people age 55 to 64, or 15.8% of the population. 69.1% of the population is younger than age 55 while 15.1% of the population is older than age 64. Population projections by age group for Jefferson County show a greater increase in population of age groups above age 55 as well as below age 15 by 2040.

The village's male to female ratio is 1.3:1 while the town's ratio is 1:1.1. While there are approximately 1,500 more males than females currently in Jefferson County, population projections predict the female population will surpass the male population in 2025.

Both the village and town have a predominantly white racial profile, with a total make up of 95.1% white, 2.5% two or more races, 1.1% Asian, 0.9% other race, and 0.4% black or African American.

The educational attainment for the population 25 years and over is roughly the same for the village and town. Overall, 8.4% have less than a high school degree, 29.4% are high school graduates, 26.1% have some college education, 21.7% obtained a bachelor's degree, and 14.4% obtained a master's degree or higher.



*The Half Way House closed its doors as a tavern after 90 years of service and became the East Hounsfield Free Library in 1913.*

For the population 16 years and over, 71.8% of the village are in the labor force while 59.6% of the town's population are in the labor force. Additionally, 211 people residing in the village are members of the Armed Forces, while only 13 people residing in the town are members. The unemployment rate is lower in the village, 2.2% compared with 5.5% in the town. According to ACS 2011 data, the top employing-industry for the town as a whole is educational services, and health care and social assistance (495 people), followed by retail trade (255 people), which is followed by arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (179 people). Median household income is nearly the same for the village and town at \$64,582 and \$64,453, respectively.

The main means of transportation to work for the whole town is by car, truck, or van with 86.7% of commuters traveling this way, 6.6% work at home, 5.8% walk, and 0.9% take public transportation. Travel time to work is less than 10 minutes for 13.1% of commuters, between 10 and 30 minutes for 60.5% of commuters and 30 minutes or more for the remaining 19.9%.

Of the civilian population 18 years and over, 11.9% have veteran status, 4.9% are 18 to 64 years, and 7.1% are 65 years and over.

Of all the houses in the village, 667 (76.6%) are occupied and 23.4% are vacant. For the town, 729 houses (70.5%) are occupied while 305 (29.5%) are vacant. Of the occupied houses in the village, 264 (39.6%) are owner occupied while 403 (60.4%) are renter occupied. For the town, 652 houses (89.4%)



*Sulphur Springs Cemetery.*

are owner occupied while 77 (10.6%) are renter occupied. Married couple families occupy the majority of houses. House value scale in the village differs from the town; 56.8% of houses in the village are valued at \$150,000 or more while 40.1% of houses in the town are valued at \$150,000 or more. 67.8% of houses in the village have a mortgage home equity loan while 53.8% of houses in the town have the same. Rental houses vary in price; 5.7% are rented for less than \$300, 6.6% are rented from \$300 to \$599, 17.7% are rented from \$600 to \$799, 29.5% are rented from \$800 to \$999, 24.1% are rented from \$1,000 to \$1,249 and the remaining 16.5% are rented from \$1,250 to \$1,999. Of the vacant houses in the village, 2.9% are for rent and 6.4% are for sale. None of the vacant houses in the town are for rent or sale. The median year structures were built is 1950 in the village and 1959 in the town.

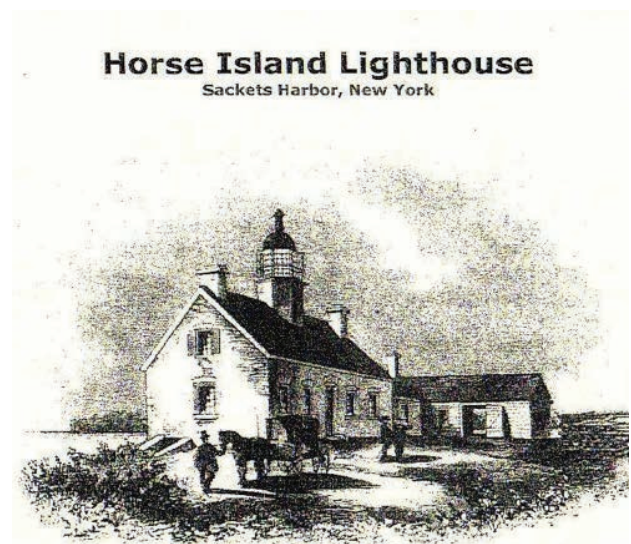
House heating fuel methods vary between the village and the town. In the village, 52.2% of homes heat with gas, 36.7% heat with electricity, 9.9% heat with fuel oil, and 1.2% heat with coal, coke, or wood. In the town, 51.7% of homes heat with gas, 39.0% heat with fuel oil, 7.7% heat with coal, coke, or wood, 1.6% heat with other fuel, and 0.0% heat with electricity.

Those living in poverty in the village include 8.5% of children under 18, 5.0% are 18 to 64, and 8.8% age 65 and over. Those living in poverty in the town include 11.3% of children under 18, 8.6% age 18 to 64, and 4.5% age 65 and over.

## Public Survey Results

### 2.1 Survey Overview

This survey was prepared for the Town of Hounsfield by the Environmental Finance Center at Syracuse University (EFC) for Fall 2012 in preparation for the Town of Hounsfield Comprehensive Plan. The target audience for this survey included residents of the Town of Hounsfield and Village of Sackets Harbor. The objective of this survey was to gather public opinion on current issues, past successes and future planning for the Town of Hounsfield to inform recommendations for the comprehensive plan. Survey results and analysis were submitted to the Town of



*The first lighthouse on Horse Island, as it appeared in 1855.*

Hounsfield in January 2013. Highlights of this survey were selected for the narrative. Full survey results can be accessed by contacting the Town Clerk.

### 2.2 Survey Method

This survey was distributed to participants in both physical copy and online via SurveyMonkey. Completed physical copies of the survey were then submitted to the Environmental Finance Center and entered into SurveyMonkey for compilation and analysis.

### 2.3 Major Findings

- Positive aspects of the Town of Hounsfield identified by survey respondents include: unique location (historic area, waterfront access, many natural resources and scenic views, Watertown accessibility), strong town services (school, library, maintenance), businesses that maintain



*Sackets Harbor Battlefield, NY State Historic Site.*



## Town of Hounsfield

rural character, strong community spirit, and friendly people.

- Negative aspects of the Town of Hounsfield identified by survey respondents include: lack of local government cooperation, high taxes and water/sewer costs, poor town aesthetics, lack of retail, commercial, public, and medical infrastructure and lack of opportunity and activities for the town youth.
- The majority of survey respondents indicated they are eager for growth that will make living in Hounsfield more convenient (i.e. grocery store, drug store, light industry, manufacturing), but are wary of unplanned and unguided growth that may tarnish the town's rural character.
- The majority of survey respondents noted a need for an increase in communication from the town through the community events calendar, local newspaper, and website content (i.e. meeting minutes and proposed legislation).

### 2.4 Other Findings

Note: For many survey questions, respondents had the option to choose more than one answer; therefore, percentages reflect the percent of respondents who chose a particular answer.

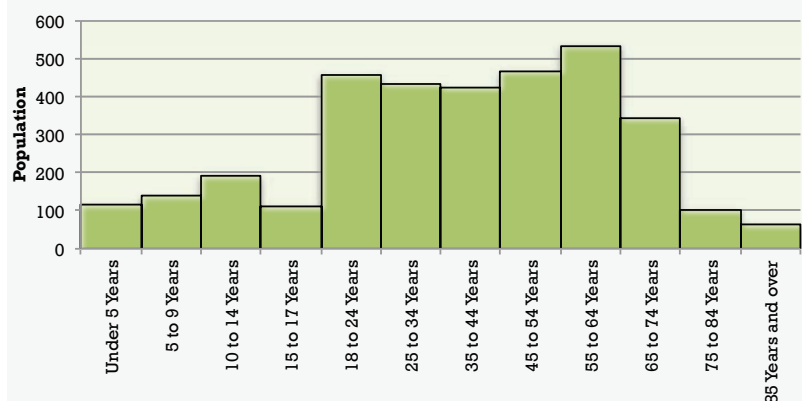
- Respondents live in Hounsfield because of location [and waterfront] (42.5%), family (22.8%), hometown (19.6%), rural character (19.6%), recreation (18.8%) and employment (13.8%).
- Very important issues for respondents include a clean, healthy environment (75.6%), reasonable cost of living (64.0%), green space and nature (51.1%), accessibility to waterfront (43.4%), and quality school district (38.8%).
- Respondents indicated some of the biggest challenges facing Hounsfield include opportunities for young people (49.6%), lack of commercial growth (42.9%), and protecting natural resources (40.2%).
- Respondents rated the following town services as "Good": fire protection (50.2%), ambulance service (42.7%). Some respondents rated local health services as

"Poor" (39.5%). The majority of respondents rated all other services as "Acceptable".

- More than half of respondents were very concerned about lake water quality (51.0%).
- The majority of respondents would prefer Hounsfield to appear as a year-round destination (62.1%), and with more tourism-related development (60.1%).
- The majority of respondents believe Hounsfield should preserve scenic views (87.4%), protect natural resources (85.9%), maintain rural character (80.6%), encourage niche farms/agritourism (73.8%), protect environment through local laws (71.1%), enhance stewardship of the lake watershed (69.9%), provide farm protection (55.1%), and increase commercial development (53.0%).
- Respondents believe Hounsfield should encourage single family housing (88.8%), hotels/motels/bed & breakfasts (79.9%), senior citizen housing (79.1%), affordable housing (67.0%), and two-family housing (55.3%).
- Respondents believe Hounsfield should also encourage a farmers' market (90.5%), public access to waterways (85.3%), hiking and biking paths (82.8%), historical society (79.5%), community center (74.5%), town park (73.5%), and outdoor athletic fields (71.1%). Respondents believe Hounsfield should not encourage ATV/4-wheeler trails (56.1%).
- Respondents believe Hounsfield should have

**Town of Hounsfield Population by Age Group**

Source: ACS 2010



*Hounsfield has a well-balanced population of young adults, middle-aged adults and retirees.*

land use regulations for: design standards for commercial development (85.1%), degradation of environmentally sensitive areas (81.4%), clustering of homes (77.7%), siting for cell towers (75.9%), future subdivision of large parcels (75.6%), as well as regulations on land use that adversely impacts the environment, mobile home placement, siting for windmills, land use that lowers surrounding land values, minimum lot sizes, siting self-storage units, rental housing inspections, and routine septic inspections.

- Respondents believe Hounsfield should publish periodic community events calendar (82.1%), improve communications with neighboring towns/villages (78.7%), place community events in local newspapers (75.8%), as well as inventory historical sites, increase frequency of constituent communication, and improve town website.

## 2.5 Town Resident vs. Village Resident Response Differences

In order to capture differences of opinion between town and village residents, the responses from both types of respondents were compared with the following notable findings:

- Affordable housing: Only 36.8% of town respondents indicated affordable housing in the town as very important, while 51.2% of village respondents did so.
- Historical richness: Only 25.2% of town respondents indicated historical richness in the town as very important, while 45.5% of village respondents did so.
- Ambulance service: Only 34.0% of town respondents indicated the town ambulance service as good, while 51.2% of village respondents did so.
- Public Drinking Water: Only 28.3% of town respondents indicated public drinking water as good, while 47.5% of village respondents did so.
- Speeding: Only 26.4% of town respondents indicated they were very concerned about speeding, while 43.9% of village respondents indicated they were.
- Snowmobile Trails: 47.6% of town respondents indicated Hounsfield should encourage

snowmobile trails while 51.3% of village respondents indicated it should not.

- No other significant differences were noted.

## 2.6 Part-time Resident vs. Full-time Resident Response Differences

In order to capture differences of opinion between full-time and part-time residents, the responses from both types of respondents were compared with the following notable findings:

- Reason for living in Hounsfield: 43.0% of full-time respondents indicated “Location” (answer with most responses), while 45.7% of part-time respondents indicated “Recreation”.
- Accessibility to Waterfront: Only 33.1% of full-time respondents indicated accessibility to waterfront as very important, while 84.1% of part-time respondents did so.
- Historical richness: Only 28.5% of full-time respondents indicated historical richness in the town as very important, while 59.1% of part-time respondents did so.
- Quality School District: 44.2% of full-time respondents indicated a quality school district as very important, while only 17.1% of part-time respondents did so.
- Biggest challenges facing Hounsfield: 53.6% of full time respondents indicated Opportunities for Young People as the biggest challenge, while 58.7% of part-time respondents indicated protecting natural resources as the biggest challenge.
- Speeding: 37.7% of full-time respondents indicated they were very concerned about speeding, while 55.0% of part-time respondents indicated only some concern about it.
- Light industry: 44.4% of full-time respondents indicated they wanted more light industry, while 60.5% of part-time respondents indicated they were neutral.
- No other significant differences were noted.

## 1.7 Participant Demographic Accuracy

In order to compare the demographics of survey respondents with actual town demographics, the survey’s “About You” responses were compared with

### *Town of Hounsfield*

American Community Survey (ACS) 2006 – 2010 data for the Town of Hounsfield. This comparison indicates whether or not the survey respondent pool accurately portrayed actual Town of Hounsfield population demographics.

The survey was completed by a total of 224 participants:

- Of these participants, 17 (7.6%) are age 18-35, 71 (31.7%) are age 36-55 and 136 (60.7%) are over 55. ACS 2006 - 2010 data indicates 2,827 residents are 18 and over; 893 (31.6%) are 18-34, 889 (31.4%) are 35-54 and 1,045 (37.0%) are over 55. This indicates uneven survey sampling in reflection of actual town age populations.
- Of these participants, 117 people (52%) reside in the town, 43 (19.2%) reside in the village and 64 (28.6%) reside in both. In comparison, according to ACS 2006 – 2010 data 2,014 people (59.5%) reside in the town and 1,370 (40.5%) reside in the village. This indicates survey respondents may accurately reflect actual town/village residency.
- Of these participants, 210 (93.8%) own their home and 14 (6.3%) rent their home. In comparison, according to ACS 2006 – 2010 data 916 homes (65.6%) are owner occupied and 480 homes (34.4%) are renter occupied. This indicates an uneven distribution of owners vs. renters responded to the survey.

### **1.8 Survey Open-Ended Response Summary**

The following is a summary of responses to open-ended questions 13, 14, 15 and 24 from the survey. Common themes were listed for each question followed by a representative comment from a respondent and a brief summary. These open-ended questions summated raw and analytical responses from survey respondents; therefore, emerging themes are important to consider when planning for the future.

**Question 13:** In your opinion, what image does our community convey to visitors?

#### **Town of Hounsfield**

*“I think community (the whole town of Hounsfield) conveys a love of its history, a commitment to rural living, a big interest in fishing and the presence of the military... I’m afraid it also conveys poor zoning, a disregard for*

*aesthetics, a declining farming community and persistent poverty.”*

While most responses to this question concerned the village, remarks for the town as a whole depict an image of large open areas, opportunity for recreation and agriculturally focused community. Most respondents noted the town as a semi-rural/suburban area. However, some responses indicated poor aesthetics such as falling barns and trash-filled yards as well as poverty, divided local government and recessed economy.

#### **Village of Sackets Harbor**

*“A peaceful, beautiful waterside village that is family friendly and historically interesting.”*

A total of 168 out of 210 respondents depicted a positive image of the village, which included descriptions such as historic character, proud vibrant community, rural cultural setting, inviting and welcoming, full of recreation opportunities, small, quaint, safe, waterfront village with events, restaurants, beauty of the surrounding areas, and, friendly, courteous residents. One respondent even noted a, “Norman Rockwell feel”.

The remaining respondents listed specific flaws in the village image. Themes included a divided local government, an exclusive community vibe and a need for more activities.

**Question 14:** What is the most positive aspect of our community, in your opinion?

#### **Location, Location, Location**

*“The historic architecture and places like the NYS Battlefield is the gem we need to work with.”*

*“Location on Lake, history and overall attractiveness of the area.”*

Out of the 210 respondents, 47 indicated accessibility to the waterfront as a positive aspect of Hounsfield, 40 indicated the historical richness of the area, 25 indicated the natural resources, scenery and clean environment, 8 indicated the proximity to Watertown for shopping and employment and 8 indicated location alone.

**Town Services and Business with a Rural Character**

*“The cleanliness of the village, the plants and hanging flower baskets, the boat launching facilities and boat docking at Market Square. Also, the historical information placards around the Battlefield and in the village are very popular with visitors.”*

*“The small town feel, the ambiance, the safeness.”*

Out of the 210 respondents, 26 indicated the rural charm/small town feel as a positive aspect of Hounsfield, 23 indicated the numerous dining choices and shopping experiences, 14 indicated a strong school system, 8 indicated recreational opportunities, 6 indicated great village aesthetics and walkability, and 2 indicated a good library.

**Friendly People with Strong Community Spirit**

*“Community members get involved in all aspects of the community when asked.”*

Out of the 210 respondents, 23 indicated the friendly and diversified residents, 21 indicated a strong sense of pride and community spirit and 6 indicated a safe neighborhood to raise a family as positive aspects of Hounsfield.

**Question 15: What is the most negative aspect of our community, in your opinion?**

**Lack of Local Government Cooperation,  
Town vs. Village Mentality**

*“... although there are some stellar people working to make things happen, the contention between town and village, chamber vs. historical works against us. The lack of activities for the anniversary of the War of 1812 is a primary example of revenue lost because groups won't work together...”*

A total of 64 out of 210 respondents (31%) indicated dissatisfaction towards town and village board cooperation, lack of communication with the residents, and/or a select group of people non-transparently making important decisions that impact the community as a whole. Some respondents suggested further outreach for the opinions of all residents as well as providing clearer explanations for proposed resolutions and legislation. Another issue mentioned was a lack of universal enforcement of zoning rules and regulations. One respondent

commented, “Lack of a clear and concise image of what the town should be and how it should be developed.”

**Higher Taxes / Water and Sewer Costs and Service**

*“Tax assessments are not fair, are extremely high and do not compare to market values.... those prospective citizens considering a move into our town are quickly turned off.”*

A total of 32 out of 210 respondents (15%) indicated dissatisfaction with taxes in both the village and the town. Both school and property taxes were mentioned as being too high and as a reason for deterred businesses. Some respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the recent tax assessments and seasonal residents felt singled-out for paying higher taxes than year-round residents. In addition to taxes, 8 respondents noted a high cost for water and sewer services.

*“No water or sewer [lines] for waterfront properties that are paying high taxes.”*

*“The Rt. 3 overlay district needs to go back to multi-use and the town needs to pursue a sewer line along Rt. 3 to promote development.”*

A total of 5 out of 210 respondents raised the issue of sewer treatment availability for lakefront properties, including both business districts and cottage communities.

**Poor Town Aesthetics**

*“Jefferson County is getting more diverse because of Fort Drum and this is not used to our advantage. We don't clean up our yards and sidewalks enough to make it look inviting. When you take a good look, you see a lot of buildings needing repair, from Madison Barracks to falling down barns along Route 3.”*

A total of 14 out of 210 respondents (7%) indicated poor property upkeep throughout the town resulting in a depreciated overall image. Property mentioned includes trash/debris covered yards of homes (examples: Military Rd. between Hess Rd. and Storrs Rd.), falling barns, the Maxon water-front property on West Main St., the Madison Barracks and adjacent apartments.



### **Lack of Retail/Commercial Development, Public and Medical Facilities**

*“Lack of high quality walkable public environments around waterfront with attractive retail opportunities to attract families and tourists to a central place.”*

*“Having to travel great distances in dangerous weather in order to find medical care and employment.”*

A total of 30 out of 210 respondents (14%) indicated a lack of retail, commercial, public, and medical infrastructure in the town and village. While respondents agreed on the lack of grocery/drug store and retail shopping options, some were wary of future compromises in the type of business and growth due to economic downturns, or “growth merely for growth’s sake”. Many respondents indicated a need for more public facilities; these included more nature trails, public gathering (meeting) spaces, museums, walking and bike paths, restrooms and, most emphasized, a public swimming/boat launch waterfront property. Distance to medical facilities is also an obstacle for residents, especially for those without means of transportation. A few respondents indicated a need for a public transportation system.

### **Police Presence (Mixed Opinion)**

*“Although I feel safe here I also feel there is over vigilance sometimes. When I worked a late evening shift and came back into my village after midnight I was often followed by police.”*

*“We have U.S. customs, sheriffs, troopers, and local PD patrolling our tiny village. It looks very ‘policed’ and is not particularly relaxing.”*

*“Lack of law enforcement when it comes to traffic control/speeding. There is none.”*

A total of 6 out of 210 respondents indicated a feeling of over vigilance by the police in the village. However, an additional 6 respondents indicated issues with speeding in both the town and village, but especially at the town-village boundary line (i.e. East Main St. to the curve, Military Rd. leaving town, road passing school to Rt. 3).

### **Lack of Activities and Opportunities for the Youth / Lack of Winter Activities**

*“Not much for teenagers to do in the community. Most teens on their bikes, skateboards or whatever seemed frowned upon. Give the kids a place to play.”*

A total of 7 out of 210 responses indicated a lack of activities and opportunities for younger residents. General consensus from respondents indicates the youth need dedicated infrastructure such as public waterfront and more walking/biking paths. As youth grow older, there is little employment opportunity in the area, spurring a move from the region.

A total 5 out 210 respondents indicated a lack of wintertime activities and an additional 3 respondents noted a lack of activities altogether.

### **Question 24 Additional Comments:**

*“Keep Sackets small and quaint. We don’t need ‘big’ business. Local shop owners should be encouraged to do business here. Make Sackets more family friendly with economical food/shopping options. Develop some type of wintertime draw to increase tourism at that time of year to help local business owners, i.e. snowmobiling with access to town restaurants/shops. Provide an outlet for residents to be more active/promote fitness.”*

*“Some of the questions about limiting development and creating development are too limited. We would be lucky to have some manufacturing and light industrial development, but also please consider the aesthetics when moving forward on the project - do not strangle growth, guide it thoughtfully.”*

*“The Town already has a lot of positives that we can work from: we don’t have to invent the wheel just improve it. We have to do more things like the Wine Trail in Agritourism where we partner with other businesses in the area.”*

*“Minutes from both town and planning board should be recorded and available online, as many other towns and cities are doing, since the Sunshine laws came into effect. Any proposed legislation/laws should also be online in their full text. For example, I may want to*

*participate in a meeting where an 'infrastructure' law is proposed regarding a major change, but if is about adding a lamp post, well, not so much. We need more communication."*

*"Grants are important but should not be the first form of funding that pops into our minds. For every dollar accepted, we give up a dollar of autonomy and decision making about a project. The need to budget and use public moneys as carefully for the general good as we do our own incomes. In support of our non-profits, we need to assess not just bottom line figures but how well they are doing their job – as seen through the eyes of outsiders as well as local residents."*

*"With all the housing developments going on in and around the village of Sackets Harbor, why isn't the tax rate lowering, instead of increasing every year. You are forcing people to sell water front properties, because people are getting to the point that they can't afford a second home as they get closer to retirement. It is sad for people having to sell family cottages, because of rising taxes."*

*"I'm afraid we are putting too many of our eggs in one basket with Ft. Drum. If Ft. Drum ever leaves all these apartments, hotels, bars, restaurants, duplexes, etc. etc. are useless. Hence, more light industrial and manufacturing."*

## 2008 Recreation Survey

### 3.1 Recreation Survey Highlights

The following are highlights taken from the results of a 2008 Hounsfield Recreation Survey. Survey results are on a 1 to 5 scale, 5 being most important. This survey indicates the most important issue to protect for recreational purposes in Hounsfield is the natural beauty of the area (4.5/5). Also of high importance is maintaining small town/rural atmosphere (4.1/5), proximity to the lake/streams (3.9/5) and historical resources/museums (3.6/5).

Respondents indicated that more of the following parks and recreation opportunities were needed: walking trails, parks along waterfront, youth recreation programs, non-motorized recreation trails, scenic resources, live concerts/performance, public dockage, adult recreation programs, festivals and local events, historical facilities/signage/tours, athletic fields, and boat launches.

Suggested recreation facilities needed in Hounsfield include walking/jogging trails (86 count), nature areas (trails) (70 counts), public beach/swimming area (66 counts), fitness/ exercise trail (66 counts), indoor fitness center (aerobics, nautilus) (64 counts), and bicycle lanes (on road/street shoulder) (62 counts).



*"We are a recreational town. The more reasons we can bring people to our town, the better for business!"*

*"We need to do more to preserve the historic nature of Sackets Harbor and to promote winter business and tourism."*

*"I used to drive to Onondaga Lake Park on the weekends to use their great paths for walking, rollerblading, and bike riding. I feel an area like that would be great up here with a public playground. I think it would be great for the community and draw people in to the shops, museums and restaurants."*



# Hounsfield Community Forum Result

On May 1 & May 4, 2013, the Town of Hounsfield hosted Comprehensive Planning Forums for town and village residents to attend and share their input towards the town's future planning efforts. The forum was open structured and comprised of four separate stations: Residential Development, Commercial Development, Public Services, and Culture and Recreation. Each station included a board with interactive questions. Attendees were also given a personal map of the town, on which they indicated where they did or did not want to see different types of development. This format allowed attendees to move throughout stations at their own pace, converse with the Comprehensive Planning Board members at each station, and provide meaningful, site-specific suggestions for the town.



## HOUNSFIELD Comprehensive Plan Forum



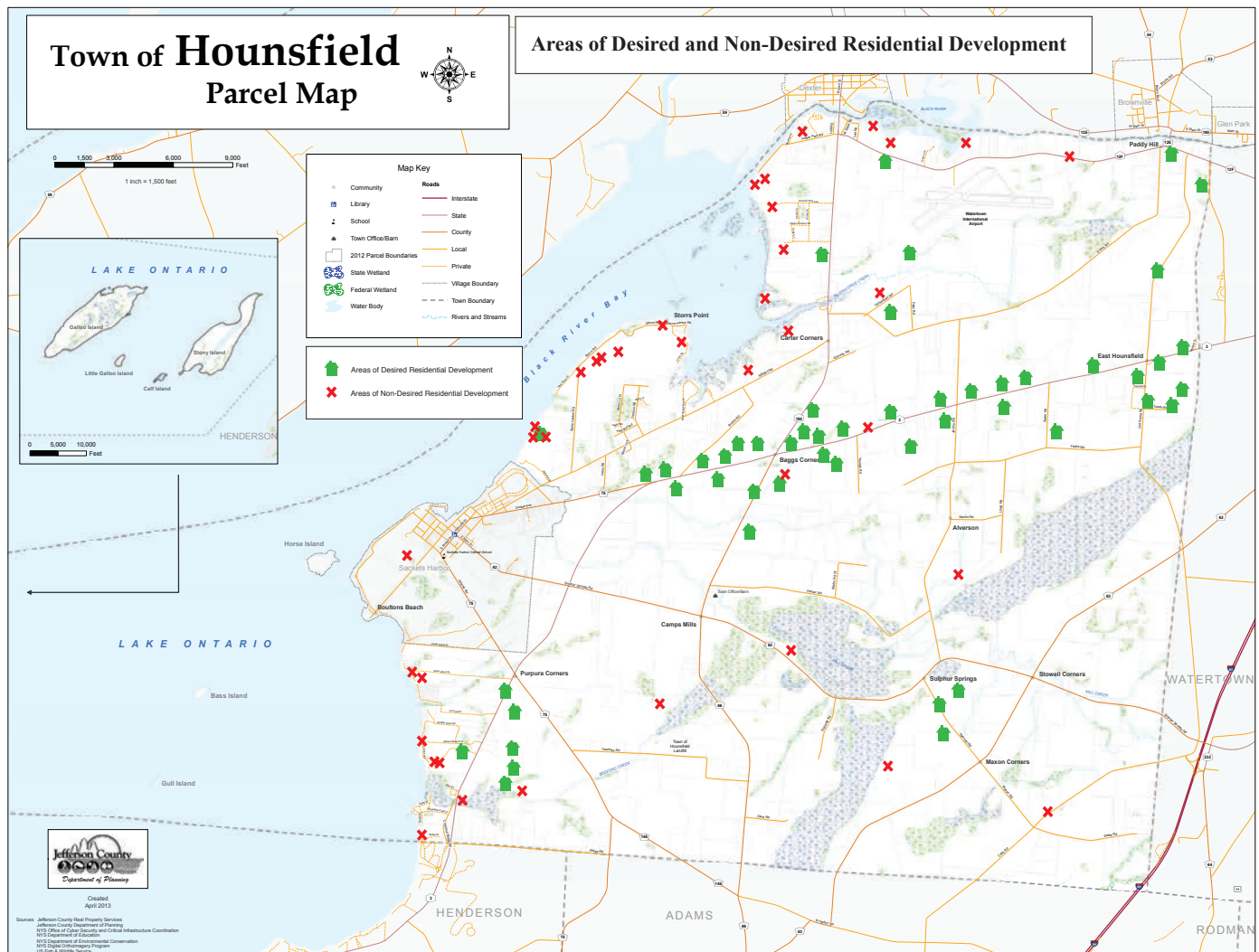
## Residential Development

The statistics on the left side of the board (opposite page) are from the American Community Survey (demographic data) and from the public survey administered in Fall 2012. There are three questions on this board. The first is “What type of housing do you want to see more of in Hounsfield?” By placing a slender sticky note in the white space next to each housing type (single family, apartment/townhouse, manufactured home, senior living facility), attendees selected the type of housing they think Hounsfield could/should support more.

The second question is “Where would you like to see the town encourage new residential development?” Attendees completed the third question on their handout maps. “Using the stickers provided, indicate

an area where you would not support additional residential/commercial development.” There was also a comment sheet at the table for attendees to add a comment related to this station.

**Residential Development Map:** Forum attendees were asked where they would and would not like to the town to encourage new residential development. This map shows the compilation of attendee input, the green houses indicate where attendees would like new residential development, while the red Xs indicate where they would not like new residential development. The results indicate development is desired along the Rt. 3 corridor leading into Sackets Harbor, and development is not desired along the majority of the shoreline.







**HOUNSFIELD**  
Comprehensive Plan Forum

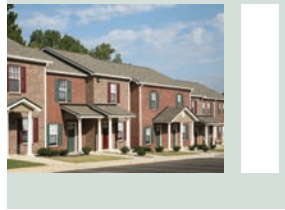
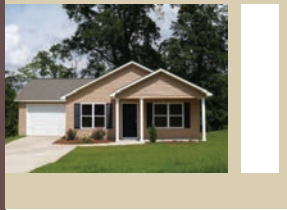
# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What type of housing do you want to see more of in Hounsfield?

2. Using stickers provided, where would you like to see the town encourage new residential development?

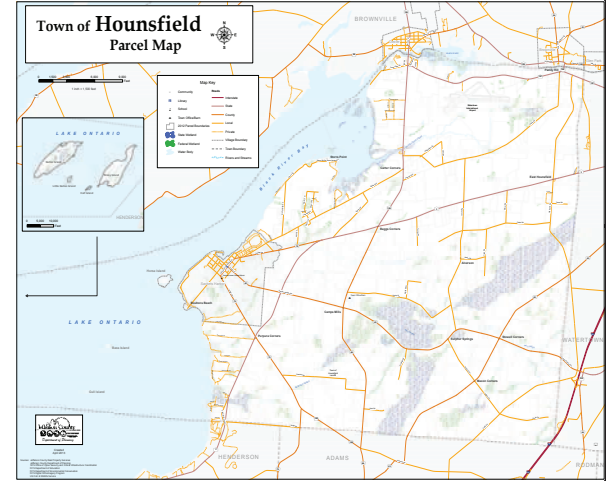
SINGLE FAMILY HOME

APARTMENTS/TOWNHOUSES



MANUFACTURED HOME

SENIOR LIVING FACILITY



3. Where would you like to see increased residential development?



Hounsfield Residential Development Statistics

How Many Residents?

3,384 Total Pop. of Hounsfield



2,014 (59.5%)  
Town of Hounsfield

1,370 (40.5%)  
Village of Sackets Harbor

For Each Below:  
% of survey respondents believe  
Hounsfield should encourage:



Single family housing



Two-family housing

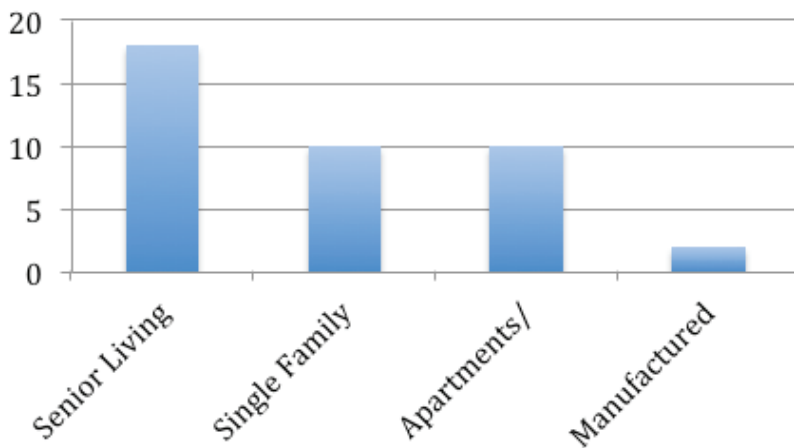


Senior Citizen housing



Affordable housing

What type of housing do you want to see more of in Hounsfield?

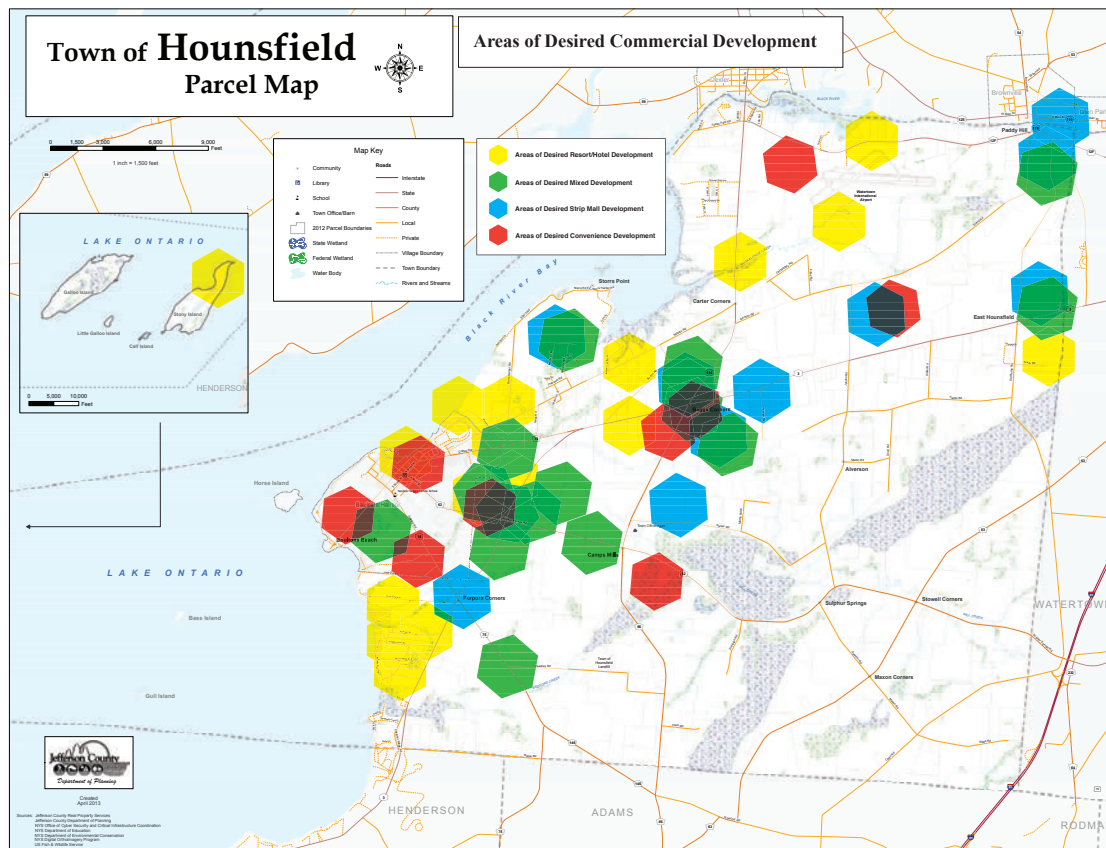


Select Comments:

- We need sewer especially on Rt. 12F! Rt. 12F is ideal for all types of housing - senior citizen as well as single-family houses.
- Single family homes along roads, how about townhouse development set back on larger lots with access to road. Sewer is a necessity for and cluster development.
- Common access for housing growth

Right: Conceptual Design of possible Senior Housing Development with commercial/retail services co-located.





## Tourism/Recreation Needs

- 4 - Public water access (swimming – lake, beach)
- 4 - Public water access (swimming – pool)
- 4 - Equipment rentals/sporting goods/outfitter/paddle boats/marine Store
- 3 - hiking/biking trails
- 3 - Recreation in general
- 3 - Art and music
- 2 - Community center - pool/art classes/track
- 2 - Public water access (fishing – streams/lake)
- 2 - Restaurants
- 2 - Historic preservation and information/Village historic tour
- 1 - Cruise
- 1 - More public dockage/overnight
- 1 - Cultural events

## Commercial Needs

- 6 - Pharmacy/drug store
- 3 - Convention center
- 3- Boutiques, or small (specialty) stores and services
- 2 - Agricultural business park
- 2 - Car wash
- 2 - Medical facility/Health centers
- 1 - Senior citizen housing
- 1 - Bakery
- 1 - Cleaners
- 1 - Dollar store

## Commercial Development

The statistics on the left side of the board on the opposite page are from the public survey, administered in Fall 2012. There are three questions on this board. The first is “What type of commercial development would you like to see in Hounsfield?” Attendees selected the type they think Hounsfield could/should support. The second question asks attendees to list one commercial or service need (retail or professional services) and one tourism/recreation need (hotel/restaurants/trail network/boat rental). Attendees placed their ideas for needs on the board. Finally, the third question is “Using the color coordinated stickers below, identify where you think these types of development might be best.” Participants were encouraged to place each of their stickers; but it was not required, in the case that the attendee did not want to see a particular type of development. There was also a comment sheet at the table for attendees to add a comment related to this station.



# COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## 1. What type of commercial development would you most like to see in Hounsfield?

### Strip Mall



Adjoining stores connected by a sidewalk. Typically, a parking lot is in front of the stores.

### Resort Hotel



A hotel for visitors to enjoy the recreation, site-seeing, and relaxation that Hounsfield and Sackets Harbor offer.

### Mixed Use



Commercial and residential development in the same buildings (typically 1st floor commercial, top floors residential).

### Convenience Store/ Gas Station



A stand-alone quick stop store stocked with everyday items; Could be located in rural or suburban settings.

## 2. List one:

### Commercial/Service Need

### Tourism/Recreation Need



### On your own map:

3. Using the color coordinated stickers below, identify where you think these types of development might be best.

**Strip Mall**  
**Resort Hotel**  
**Mixed Use**  
**Convenience Store/Gas Station**

53.0% •

Of survey respondents believe Hounsfield should **increase** commercial development

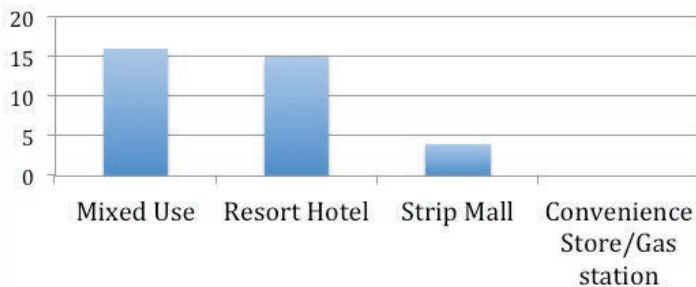
79.9% •

Of survey respondents indicate the lack of commercial growth is the biggest challenge facing Hounsfield

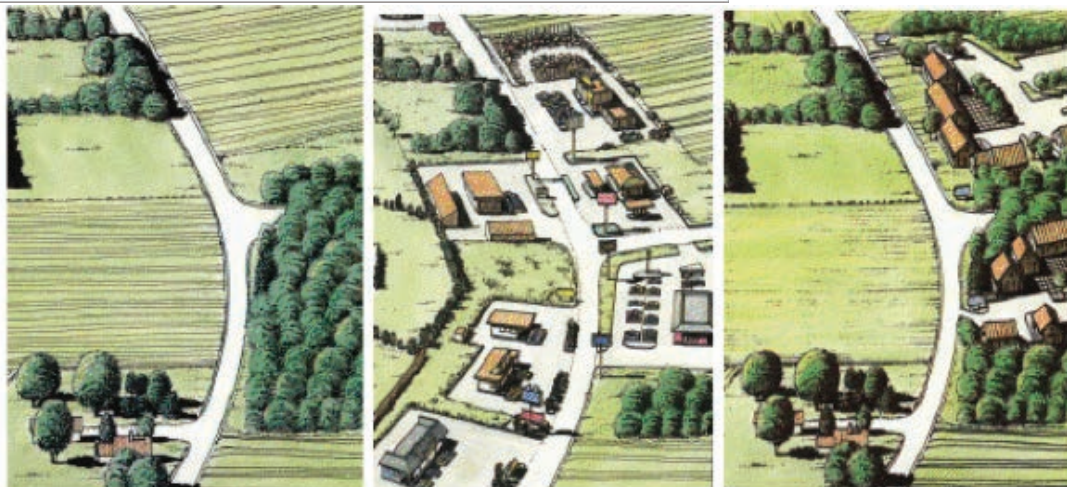
42.9% •

Of survey respondents believe Hounsfield should **encourage** hotels/motels/bed & breakfasts

## What type of commercial development would you most like to see in Hounsfield?



Above: Potential in-fill and revitalization of the Madison Barracks. Design concepts for potential development.



Left: Design concepts for potential clustered development along Route 3 corridor.



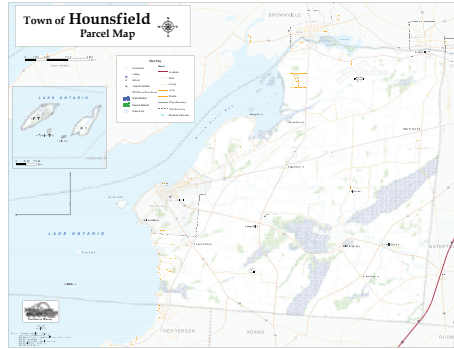
On the left side of the board on the opposite page are a list of services currently provided and a pie chart of the cost of NYS local government tax spending on services to provide context for how much services cost. There are five questions on this board.

- Question 5 required participants to use their own map. Using a marker, participants drew lines or circle in areas they recommended adding water or sewer infrastructure. The blue marker was used for water infrastructure and red marker was used for wastewater infrastructure. If the attendee did not believe in extending either of these services, they left it blank; there was also a comment sheet at the table for attendees to add a comment related to this station.

- *Volunteers should get some type of stipend for their work and community efforts*
- *Tax increase still have to be monitored but we need to have some town services for folks*
- *We need a yearly or biannual junk pick up (things that trash men do not take). I would gladly pay a tax increase.*
- *Full transfer site for garbage and other trash—A visit with Town of Brownville about how their transfer site is operated would be a good idea.*
- *No tax increase or we have to leave; ask waste management about composting, then give compost to residents (or sprinkle along trails, which are great!)*
- *I would support some extension of drinking water and sewer lines, but let newcomers buy systems as cottage people do.*



# PUBLIC SERVICES

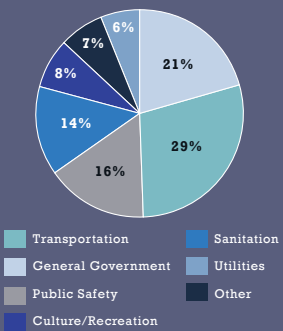


## Hounsfield Public Service Statistics

### Public Services in Hounsfield:

Police  
Fire Fighters  
Ambulance  
Water Delivery  
Snow Plowing

### NYS Municipality Tax Spending



Adapted from: "Capital Expenditures by Jurisdiction for Counties, Cities, Towns, Villages and Fire Districts (2002)", Office of the New York State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability, August 2003.

### 1. Would you support tax increases for the town to provide these services?

	Yes	No
Trash Pick up		
Yard Waste Removal		
Police		
New Recycling Site or Extended Hours		

### 2. Would you support extension of drinking water or sewer lines to support residential development?

Yes	No

### 3. Should the town and village save money by sharing more services?

Yes	No

### 4. Should emergency services stay volunteer?

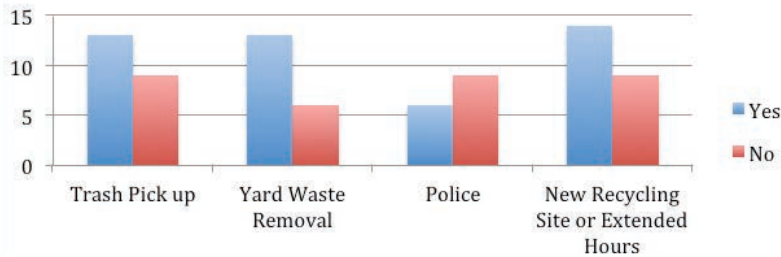
Yes	No



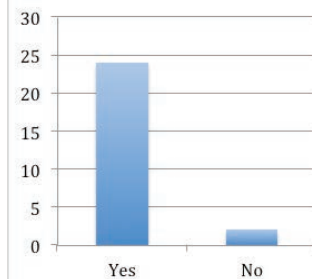
### On your own map:

5. Using a marker, draw lines or circle areas you would recommend adding water or sewer infrastructure.

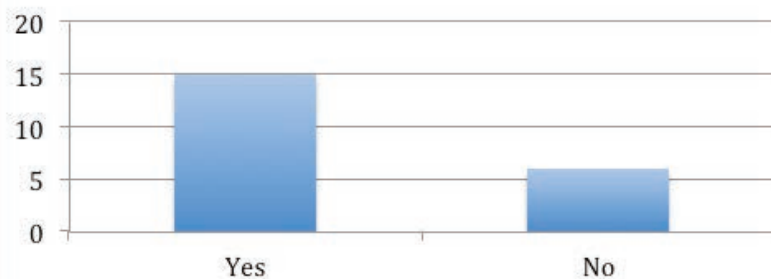
### Would you support tax increases for the town to provide these services:



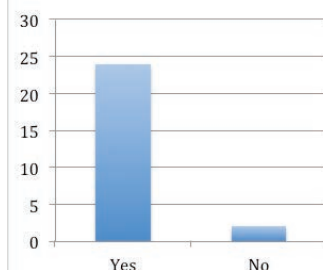
### Would you support extension of drinking water or sewer lines to support residential development?



### Should emergency services stay volunteer?



### Should the town and village save money by sharing more services?

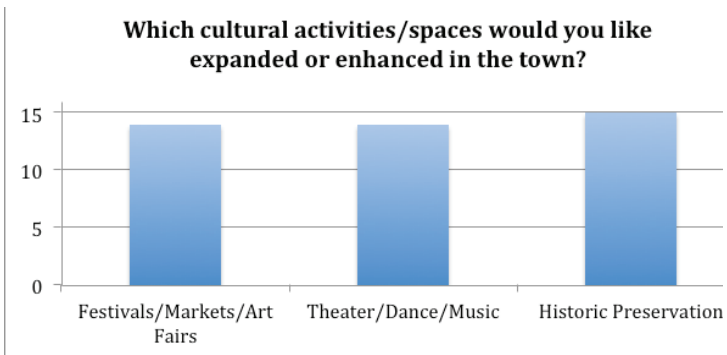


## Culture and Recreation

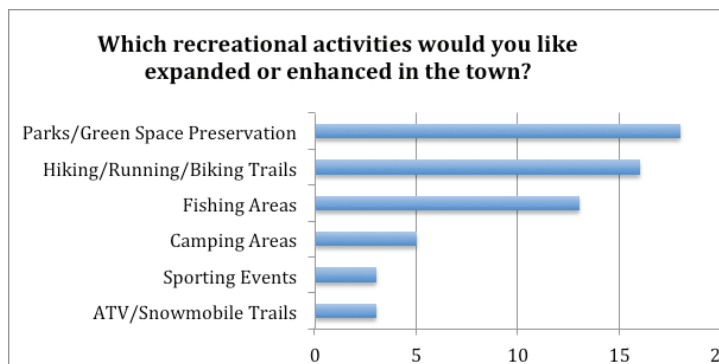
The statistics on the left side of the board are from the comprehensive planning survey, administered in Fall 2012. There are two questions with many boxes on this board. 1. “Which recreational activities/spaces would you like expanded or enhanced in the town?” Participants selected by placing a slender sticky note in the white space next to each type (hiking/biking/running trails; ATV/snowmobile trails; camping areas; sporting events, fishing areas, parks/green space preservation). 2. “Which cultural activities/spaces would you like expanded or enhanced in the town?” Each participant was given three sticky notes to prioritize their interests for the whole board.

### Comments:

- Camping sites may be helpful to encourage local people and families as well as tourists
- The arts encourage collegiality and tourism as well
- Surfacing the current, newly formed walking/jogging trail would be helpful
- Preserve the stone bridges
- Have concert venues like the Clayton Opera House
- Community Center w/ pool/ art classes/ health classes (yoga, dance, tai chi, etc.) (Year-round)



*A new or existing structure could serve as a rental community space and/or a civic space used for activities such as those expressed to the left.*



*A well-designed, and appropriately-sized amphitheatre within a park setting, or as a Town Square, could serve multiple year-round functions.*

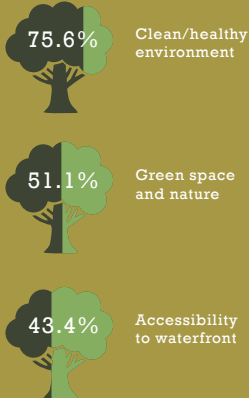


## CULTURE & RECREATION



### Culture and Recreation Development Statistics

Survey Respondents indicated the following as very important:



### 1. Which recreational activities/spaces would you like expanded or enhanced in the town?



### 2. Which cultural activities/spaces would you like expanded or enhanced in the town?



### FAIRPLAY TOWN PARK [SITE PLAN] FAIRPLAY, CO



A Town park, in the right location with the right partners (School District) could become a multi-faceted recreational area with sports fields, walking, hiking, cross-country ski trails, and biking trails and perhaps fishing and water access. An indoor civic space may also serve to house other arts and cultural activities.

## Recommended Actions

Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Action	Criteria for Evaluating Success
<b>Immediate Priority Actions</b>			
<p><b>A-1. Adopt harmonized commercial growth structure in Hounsfield to include mixed use and tourism amenity development, while improving existing infrastructure and providing necessary services for permanent residents</b></p> <p>Appropriate commercial growth promotes year-round tourism-related activities, increases job opportunities, enhances town aesthetics and increases quality of life and serve availability for permanent residents. The principles of smart growth (Appendix C) should be considered when planning for commercial growth.</p>	Chamber of Commerce, Planning Boards	In Partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, offer a Mixed-Use development training presentation to the business communities	Gain 'buy-in' from businesses and encourage developers to propose mixed use plans
<p><b>A-2. Establish drinking water and sewer line extension plan to support strategic development in specific areas of the township</b></p> <p>Areas with increased development will likely require water and sewer lines. In addition, some residents are requesting water and sewer lines in areas where development already exists (example, Rt. 12F). A needs assessment should be conducted so the town may prioritize which areas have the greatest demand, and which areas may have a demand in the near and long-term future.</p>	Water Department	Continue to identify critical areas for infrastructure growth to support existing development and encourage future strategic development	Proposed new water/wastewater infrastructure is mapped
<p><b>A-3. Develop a Housing Committee</b></p> <p>Survey respondents and forum participants indicated a need for various types of housing development, with senior citizen housing as a top priority. The town should consider where further development is appropriate, such as along the Rt. 3 arterial corridor, and which developments are appropriate in each potential location. The future of Fort Drum housing needs should also be considered.</p> <p>Different development styles should be explored, including cluster/open space development and small setbacks and lot sizes. Walkability and mixed-use development along this corridor should also be encouraged. Zoning updates will help to encourage this development.</p> <p>New housing opportunities should be encouraged, including single family, two-family and senior citizen housing; Consider supporting the creation of an organization similar to Neighbors of Watertown.</p>	Town and Village Boards with Housing Associations, County	<p>Encourage housing opportunities including single family, two-family and senior citizen housing; Consider supporting the creation of an organization similar to Neighbors of Watertown.</p> <p>In cooperation with the Economic Development Officer, the Marketing Committee, and other interested community groups, prepare a Housing Plan and prospectus to attract developers,</p>	Plan and Prospectus complete, publically available and distributed

## Town of Hounsfield

Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Action	Criteria for Evaluating Success
<b>Secondary Priority Actions</b>			
<b>B-1. Expansion of local health services and pharmacy availability (walk-in clinics, urgent care facility)</b>  While a hospital may not be feasible, professional offices, urgent healthcare/walk-in clinics, hospice services, and pharmacies are an essential part of the services needed, and provided, in any community.	Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, Regional Health Council, Planning Board	Develop a prospectus	Begin communications with regional healthcare providers and pharmacies, secure/incent development of new facilities
<b>B-2. Work to create economic vitality and job for younger generations</b>  New job opportunity attracts younger generations to the area and encourages current residents to continue investing in the community. Encouraging industrial, commercial and tourism-related growth, expanded services, and affordable housing will aid this goal. One project example is the creation of a transportation industrial park near Hounsfield's airport, similar to the Plattsburgh International Airport. This project would include intermodal transportation to I-81 and US and Canadian rail networks, development space and opportunity for aviation/transportation research and manufacturing. This project would appeal to businesses in need of large-scale buildings for manufacturing and maintenance purposes.	Town/Village Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Civic Associations and Trade Organizations	Continue to support economic development committee, under co-direction of Economic Development Director, and Chamber President to plan	Economic Development and Job Growth Plan used to attract state/Federal funding and increased investment from private sector
<b>B-3. Expand sport and outdoor recreation facilities and lands</b>  Sports and outdoor recreation opportunities add value to the community as services and assets that retain existing residents and attract new growth. Expanding sports facilities with the school district may be beneficial. Outdoor recreation activities identified for expansion include fishing, boating, hiking/running/biking, and more. An example of a potential expansion might include creating a park in the township that is linked to the existing trail system.	Joint Recreation Commission, School District, Planning Board	Continue committee discussions and planning; Create a Capital Improvement Plan for growth and development of Parks and recreation assets; submit project ideas for NYS funding	Improved opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation
<b>B-4. Promote stewardship of lake and tributary water quality</b>  While the town cannot take ownership of this task, it can support the lake association and NYSDEC by guiding stewardship efforts. The town, through code enforcement, can also ensure that residents remain in compliance with regulations. The town can also provide education, using its website, newsletter. An example would be educating lakeside residents about proper sewage systems.	Lake Association, Environmental Conservation Commission, Code Enforcement	Develop educational messages and materials for Town website, bill mailers and newsletter; Create ideas for signage; Ensure compliance through code enforcement, training	Increased Visibility of Importance of Lake Water Quality and Individual Actions to protect it



Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Action	Criteria for Evaluating Success
<p><b>B-5. Ensure relevant land use restrictions for the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degradation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas</li> <li>• Design Standards for Commercial Development</li> <li>• Future Subdivision of Large Parcels</li> <li>• Land Use That Lowers Surrounding Land Values</li> <li>• Land Use That Adversely Impacts the Environment</li> <li>• Minimum Lot Sizes</li> <li>• Mobile Home Placement</li> <li>• Siting Self-Storage Units</li> <li>• Rental Housing Inspections</li> <li>• Siting for Cell Towers</li> <li>• Siting Alternative Energies</li> </ul> <p>Consistent Zoning and Codes Enforcement will ensure maintenance of Hounsfield's rural character and will provide clarity and consistency for future development.</p>	Zoning Enforcement Officer, Codes Enforcement Officer	Support existing enforcement with additional support	Public understanding and consistency and clarity on zoning and codes
<p><b>B-6. Inventory historical sites</b></p> <p>Hounsfield and Sackets Harbor are rich with historic sites and landmarks that serve as community assets when effectively promoted, protected, and preserved. An inventory of historical sites will designate the resources needed to protect and preserve these assets while also promoting them as destinations.</p>	Town Historian, Historical Society	Appoint historian; Discuss, plan, execute in coordination with historical society	Historical sites are inventoried, protected and preserved; State/ Federal funding may be applicable
<p><b>B-7. Increase Town Communications</b></p> <p>Given an increase in electronic communications, diversity in avenues for promoting open meetings and forums on town projects will increase public input. Town website traffic may be increased through a comprehensive events calendar (to include meeting information as well as general community events), ease of use, and information for town residents as well as prospective visitors. The website could be viewed as an asset to promote the town, and all activities within it.</p>	Town and Village Clerk	Create Communications and Outreach Plan and Schedule; Investigate intern support for Clerk	Improved town promotions, public input in town affairs and increased accessibility to myriad audiences with differing interests
<p><b>B-8. Improve communications with neighboring towns/villages</b></p> <p>Communicating with neighboring towns and villages will further improve government efficiency by comparing and combining similar projects, discussing shared concerns/issues and taking subsequent action, governing with a regional vision and aligning goals with the North Country REDC Key Strategies.</p>	All Town/ Village Boards, Committees and Departments	Share meeting schedules with neighboring towns/ villages	Increase in awareness and in joint planning, projects, and regional activities

## Town of Hounsfield

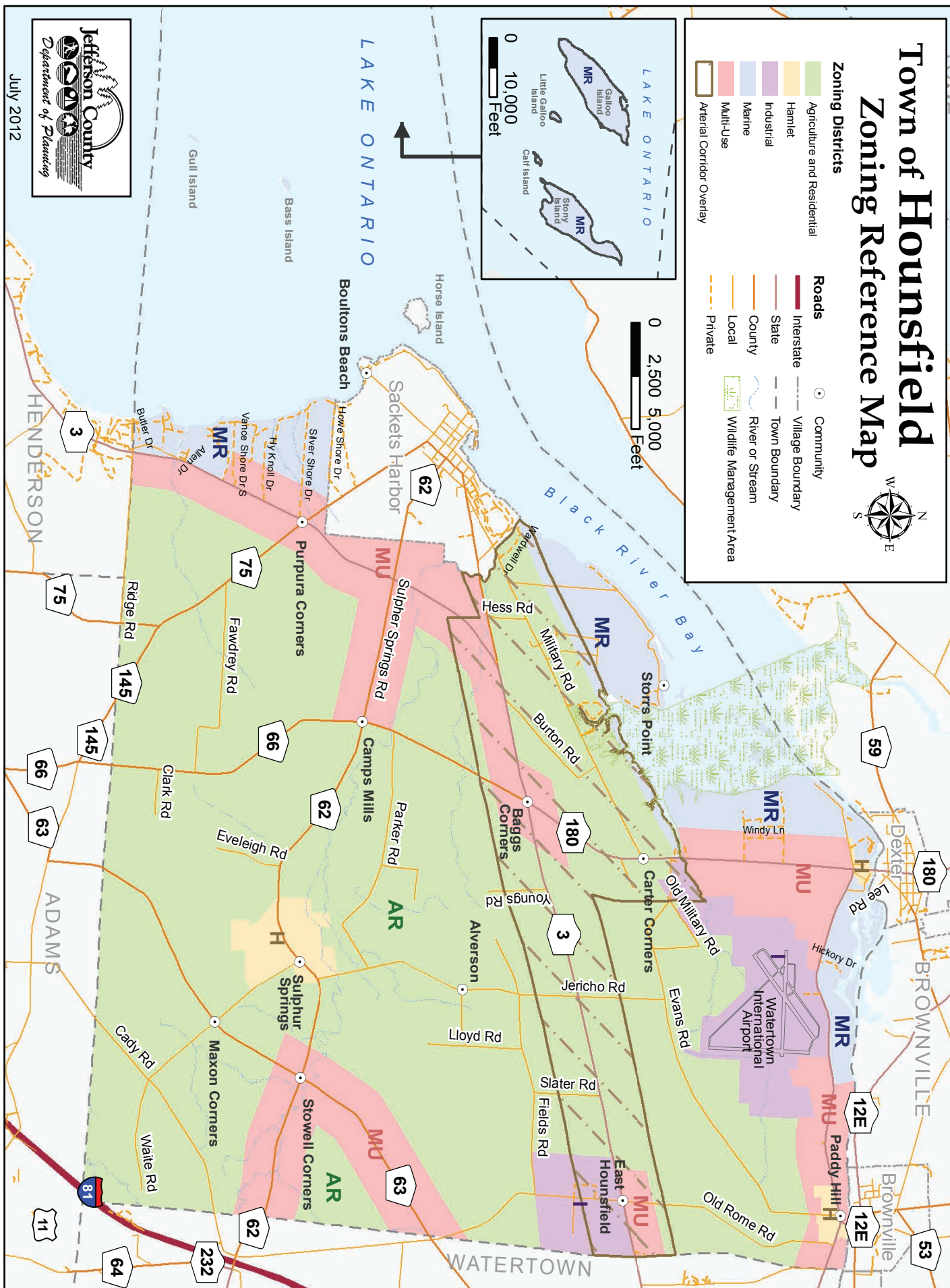
Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Action	Criteria for Evaluating Success
<p><b>B-9. Increase town/village partnerships; Increase Town/Village shared services</b></p> <p>Improving local government efficiency, while attracting additional community opportunities, can result in significant cost savings. Combining appropriate town and village services can increase efficiency and savings and increase partnerships. One source of aid to conduct a Shared Services Feasibility Study is NYSDOS's Local Government Efficiency Program, which provides technical assistance and competitive grants for the development of projects that will achieve savings and improve efficiency through shared services, cooperative agreements, mergers and consolidations.</p>	All Town/ Village Boards, Committees and Departments	Research and apply for NYSDOS planning grant for shared services	Increase in joint planning, projects, and services based on results of Feasibility Study
Long-Term Actions			
<p><b>C-1. Continue to preserve and promote Hounsfield's clean healthy environment, green (open) space, natural resources, to maintain Hounsfield's rural character</b></p> <p>Developed partnerships with the area land trusts will enable the town to protect working farms, forestlands, wild lands, and natural and cultural heritage, for the benefit of present and future generations. Educating landowners about the town's goals will aid this effort.</p>	Ontario Bays Initiative, Tug Hill Land Trust, Thousand Island Land Trust, Environmental Conservation Committee, Landowners, Parks and Recreation Committee	Develop multi-municipal stewardship plan, increase conservation easements and farmland protection programs	Stewardship plan implemented
<p><b>C-2. Encourage and promote community activities and spaces, including a community center, farmers market and town park</b></p> <p>Supporting year-round community activities will improve quality of life for Town residents. A town-supported community center could be a venue for these community activities. An example project of an indoor community space is a public venue which provides activities and entertainment for all ages throughout the week; such as dance classes, zumba, children's activities, and concerts.</p>	Joint Recreation Commision, School, Civic Groups and Sports Groups.	Create committee to discuss, plan, execute	Improved support of community activities for increased quality of life

*2014 Comprehensive Plan*

Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Action	Criteria for Evaluating Success
<p><b>C-3. Improve public waterfront access (public swimming, boating, and fishing locations)</b></p> <p>Increasing public water access sites will be an asset to the Town, increase tourism and quality of life. For water access on Lake Ontario, the town may consider purchasing land to designate as a swimming area and boat launch (NYSDEC may partner on a project). Fishing access can be created by encouraging landowners with property adjacent to streams and rivers to participate in NYSDEC's Public Fishing Rights program, which are permanent easements allowing anglers to fish and walk along the bank.</p>	Planning Board, Joint Recreation Commission, Environmental Conservation Committee, NYSDEC	Procurement of private property for conversion to public use; Establish NYSDEC Public Fishing Rights	Increased public water access for swimming, boating, and fishing
<p><b>C-4. Promote Agri-business</b></p> <p>Farms and farmlands in the Town of Hounsfield have been decreasing for decades. The town should work jointly with the Jefferson County Agricultural Development Committee to assist in the retention, growth, and promotion of the town's agricultural industry, including value-added agriculture. Farmland protection programs may be available to farmers through the County Soil and Water Conservation District or USDA Farm Service Agency/Natural Resource Conservation Service. The town may provide information to farmers who wish to take advantage of these programs.</p>	Participate in Agri-business Committee, including Jefferson County Agricultural Development Committee, Jefferson County SWCD, Federal/State Agencies (USDA)	Potentially create a multi-municipality agriculture promotion and protection committee; Support development of an Agri-Business Park	Farmland owners participating in farmland protection programs; New niche farms and value-added products begin operation in the Town
<p><b>C-5. Promote tourism-related development and image, including year-round activities, cultural/art opportunities, recreation/sports opportunities, waterfront usage, and agritourism</b></p> <p>Survey respondents and forum participants indicated a need for year-round tourism-related activities, as opposed to strictly summer tourism. Regional partnerships can act as an important tool to plan for the management and development of the Town's assets and resources, such as the Discovery Center in Sackets Harbor.</p> <p>St. Lawrence, Jefferson and Lewis Counties, along with "Visit the 1000 Islands" could work together to promote events and year-round opportunities that benefit specific communities and the region as a whole.</p>	Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Director and Committee with Surrounding Towns and Jefferson County	Continue to develop Local and Regional Partnerships and Promotions; align with REDC strategies; participate in regional tourism boards	Increased tourism activity and revenue in the region
<p><b>C-6. Improve town aesthetics</b></p> <p>Survey respondents indicated the desire to improve town aesthetics, including residential yard clean up, abandoned structure removal, and building repairs. These upgrades will improve the town's image.</p>	Codes Enforcement Officer, Bill Stuffers, Public Education Campaign, Town Beautification Committee	Enforcement and evaluation (and potential revision) of current codes	Private investment in improving community aesthetics

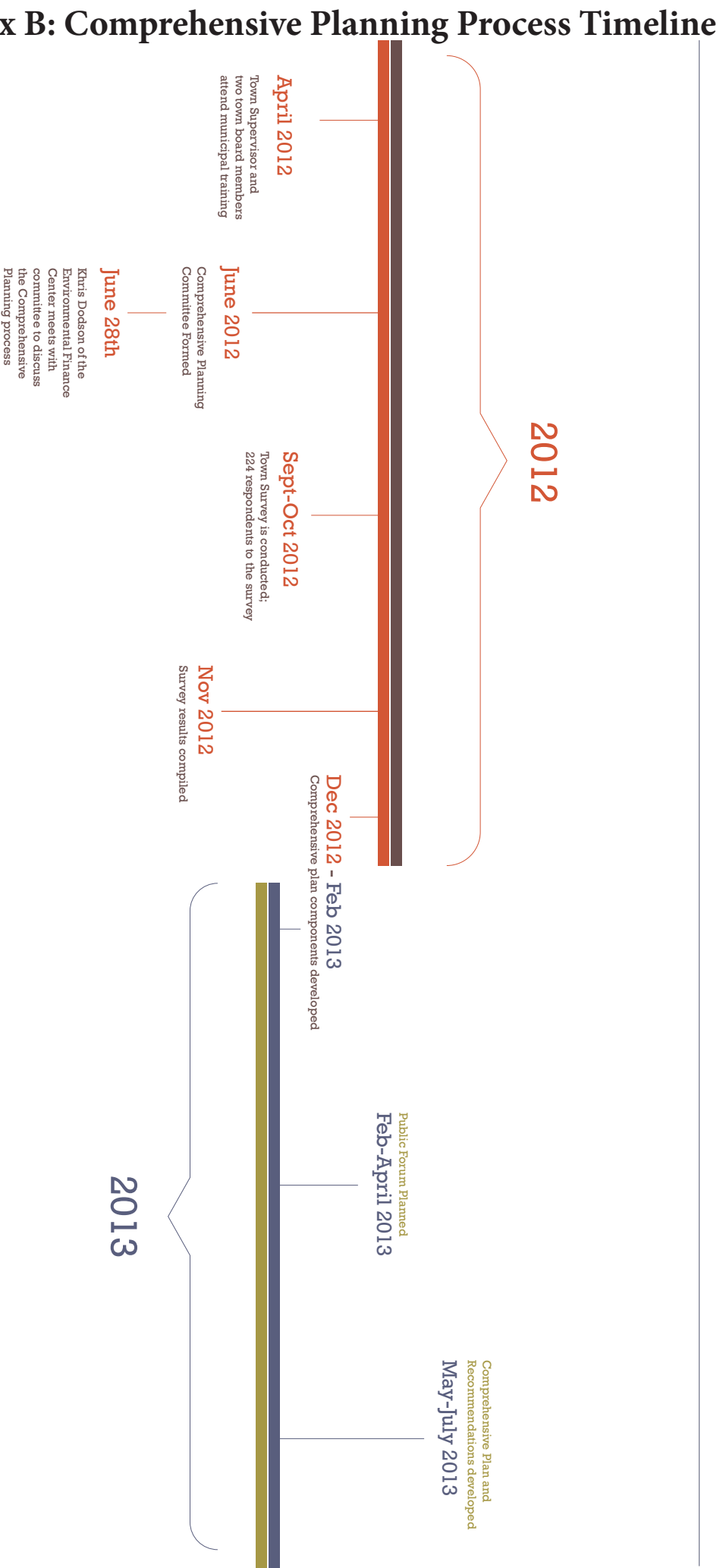


## Appendix A: Hounsfield Zoning Reference Map





## HOUNSFIELD Comprehensive Plan Forum



## Appendix C: Smart Growth and Smart Growth Principles

Smart growth values long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over a short-term focus. Its goals are to achieve a unique sense of community and place; expand the range of transportation, employment, and housing choices; equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development; preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources; and promote public health.

Smart growth is a planning and transportation practice that concentrates growth in compact walkable centers to avoid sprawl. It also advocates compact, transit-oriented, walkable, bicycle-friendly land use, including neighborhood schools, complete streets, and mixed-use development with a range of housing choices.

There are 10 accepted principles that define smart growth  
(Please note related Recommended Actions from pages 34-39):

1. Mix land uses (A-1, B-1, B-6, C-4)
2. Take advantage of compact building design (B-6, A-2)
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices (A-3, B-1)
4. Create walkable neighborhoods (B-4)
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place  
(A-1, B-4, B-6, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5, C-6)
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas (B-5, B-6, C-1, C-3)
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities (A-1, A-3, B-9, C-2)
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices (B-3)
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective (A-1, A-3, B-6, B-10)
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions (A-1, A-3, B-6, B-10)



## Appendix D: North Country Regional Economic Development Council Progress Report 2012

*Excerpts from Strategy Overview*

### THE VISION

The North Country will lead the economic renaissance of New York State's small cities and rural communities. We will:

- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, and manufacturing industries.
- Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities.
- Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher education.
- Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the state.
- Elevate global recognition of the region as one of the special places on the planet to visit, live, work and study.
- Activate tourism as a driver to diversify our economies.
- Propagate an agricultural revolution as we help feed the region and the world.
- Create the greenest energy economy in the state.

### North Country Regional

#### Co-Chairs

- Anthony "Tony" G. Collins, Ph.D., President, Clarkson University
- Garry Douglas, President, North Country Chamber of Commerce

### North Country Representatives

- Ken Blankenbush, State Assembly, 117th District
- Cali Brooks, Executive Director, Adirondack Community Trust (ACT)
- John R. Donoghue, President, Plattsburgh-Saranac Lake Building and Construction Trades Council
- Randy Douglas, Chair, Essex County Legislature
- Janet Duprey, State Assembly, 115th District
- John Ettling, Ph.D, President, SUNY Plattsburgh
- William Farber, Chair, Hamilton County

#### Legislature

- Kate Fish, Executive Director, Adirondack North Country Association
- Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Chair, Jefferson County Legislature
- Jeffrey E. Graham, Mayor, City of Watertown
- Paul Grasso, President, The Development Corporation
- Joseph Griffo, State Senate, 47th District
- Bridget-Ann Hart, President, Kinney Drugs
- Hugh Hill, Executive Director, Malone Chamber of Commerce
- Billy Jones, Chair, Franklin County Legislature
- Donald Kasprzak, Mayor, City of Plattsburgh
- James Langley, Chair, Clinton County Legislature
- Elizabeth Little, State Senate, 45th District
- James McKenna, President & CEO, Lake Placid Convention and Visitors Bureau/Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism
- Carl A. McLaughlin, Executive Director, Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization
- Anne L. Merrill, Executive Director, Lewis County Chamber of Commerce
- William P. Murray, Executive Director, Council for International Trade, Technology, Education and Communication
- Jonathan Putney, Chair, St. Lawrence County Legislature
- Marie Regan, Supervisor, Town of Potsdam
- Patricia Ritchie, State Senate, 48th District
- Addie Russell, State Assembly, 116th District
- Michael Tabolt, Chair, Lewis County Legislature
- David Tomberlin, Well Dressed Food
- Mark E. Tryniski, President & CEO, Community Bank, N.A.
- Eric Virkler, Lewis County Legislative Representative
- Donna Wadsworth, Communications Director, International Paper Company - Ticonderoga Mill
- Lisa Weber, CEO, Timeless Frames and Timeless Decor
- Daniel Wilt, President of Wilt Industries
- James W. Wright, Executive Director, Development Authority of the North Country

in broadband access.

## **AGRICULTURE**

### Key Strategy:

Maintain, establish and expand the presence of storage, processing and distribution facilities in the region to promote the sales of value-added agricultural products that are sold locally and globally.

### The Key to its Importance:

The North Country is one of the State's leading agricultural areas, with substantial agricultural presence and impact throughout the seven counties in activities as varied as dairy, apples and forest products, among others. It was evident in the creation of our plan last year that most of this enormous production is leaving the region to be processed elsewhere, limiting the economic return to the North Country while also diminishing the return to our producers. The key to unlocking the full potential of agriculture as a vital part of the North Country economy remains the development of facilities and services as stated in this Key Strategy.

## **BROADBAND**

### Key Strategy:

Support affordable broadband access throughout the North Country Region. (B-3, C-4, C-2, C-5)

### The Key to its Importance:

While all rural areas face challenges in developing affordable, comprehensive broadband access, the North Country's challenges are far greater due to greater distances between population centers, the smaller scale on average of its overall business community, and the unique geography and circumstances of the Adirondack Park. At the same time, the Region has even more to gain if it can achieve inclusion in the 21st century economy centered around broadband, from telecommuting to maximizing the reach of its small businesses to global markets, not to mention the crucial role broadband can play in such basic elements of community sustainability as medicine, education, and access to a wide range of otherwise inaccessible services. The key to unlocking this potential is sustained, focused support for public and private investment that can, piece by piece, fill the large remaining gaps

## **CANADIAN CONNECTION**

### Key Strategy:

Optimize fluidity at the North Country's U.S. - Canada Border Crossings. The relative ease and predictability of the crossborder movement of cars and commercial traffic, as well as trains, boats and energy transmission, is essential to a successful North Country economic future. It is also vital to the North Country's key role as New York's gateway with Quebec and Ontario, bringing progress and opportunity to the entire state. (A-1, C-3, C-5)

### 2012 Refinement:

The above reflects the addition of "trains, boats and energy transmission" to the optimization of fluidity at the border, thereby recognizing these additional forms of commercial movement which also hold direct economic value to the North Country and New York State.

### The Key to its Importance:

The North Country's connectivity with Canada in all of its many forms constitutes one of the most pervasive economic impacts in the region, bringing current and potential benefits to sectors as diverse as manufacturing, tourism, distribution, energy and more. In addition, the North Country serves actively and effectively as the gateway for international commerce and investment from Quebec and Ontario for the entire state. Our Canadian connection is not only a special element of our economic future but one which requires sustained and specialized attention and approaches. It is indeed a clear key to the North Country's future economic well-being.

## **CLEAN ENERGY**

### Key Strategy:

Invest in large and small clean energy businesses. (A-1, B-3, B-6)

### 2012 Refinement:

We have simply clarified this basic strategy statement to make it inclusive of all of the North Country's clean energy opportunities, which are currently being comprehensively assessed and defined as part of our Cleaner Greener Communities planning initiative, funded as a 2011 Priority Project.

The Key to Its Importance:

By its very nature as a region, the North Country hosts abundant natural resources and possesses clear opportunities to play an economically beneficial role in the movement to cleaner, renewable energy sources from hydro to wind to biomass, among others. Utilizing our assets and resources in a sustainable way to support local development and to export energy and import dollars remains one of the keys to our well rounded economic future.

**BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION**

Key Strategy:

Create a Business Retention and Expansion plan for existing large manufacturers. (A-1, B-3)

The Key to Its Importance:

The challenge of retaining existing manufacturing is growing everywhere. However, the impact of both success and failure can be even greater in the North Country due to its character—including the impact a downsizing or closure has on the smaller communities which constitute our region and the special challenges of attracting new manufacturing to rural instead of metro areas. With this in mind, it remains key to our regional aims that we focus ever greater attention not only on potential newcomers but on the stabilization, efficiency, success and potential growth of the strong and diverse manufacturing base we continue to enjoy.

**DEFENSE**

Key Strategy:

Address the shortage of rental housing available for soldiers and their families in the Fort Drum area and, in turn, improve the quality of housing options for the community as a whole. (A-3, B-1, B-9, A-2)

The Key to its Importance:

Fort Drum is not only the largest single employer in the North Country but is also one of the largest in the state. The availability of sufficient, quality, affordable housing for its personnel has been clearly identified as the top priority for securing its long term continuation as a major base, positioning it for future federal investments and new missions, and fulfilling our overall responsibilities to our citizens in uniform and their families. At the same time, addressing the identified shortage will relieve pressures on the entire surrounding housing market.

The future of Fort Drum is one of the keys to the North Country economy, and this strategy is key to its future.

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

Key Strategy:

Maximize North Country utilization of energy efficiency resources and programs to reduce total housing and energy costs.

The Key to its Importance:

Energy costs in New York State, and particularly in the North Country with its winters and its distances, are higher than elsewhere. Each dollar expended on energy costs of various kinds that can be saved through the implementation of efficiencies and new technology or practices is a dollar retained in the region for other economic circulation and, in the case of businesses, an enhancement in productivity and profitability. This strategy remains a key to overall economic progress in this region.

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

Key Strategy:

The North Country's institutions of higher education and research/development will review and implement incentives for collaborative projects, research and entrepreneurial activity among and between the colleges and universities. (B-3, B-9)

2012 Refinement:

This strategy statement has been reworded to shift from "recognizing" the opportunities inherent in the region's higher education cluster to reflecting a far more action-oriented statement, committed to a variety of collaborative opportunities. This reflects the great progress made this year in launching unprecedented communication and shared activity among our region's institutions of higher education and research.

The Key to Its Importance:

The North Country possesses an extraordinary cluster of universities, colleges, community colleges and research institutions. Each has been a key partner in economic development in various ways in the past, but in limited ways and generally within a limited sense of geography. There is clearly enormous added value to be gained for the North Country through a collaborative approach that can strengthen the work of each of these institutions while delivering even greater value and support to a wide range of



## *Town of Hounsfield*

economic development endeavors region-wide. This strategy is clearly a key to the successful pursuit of multiple other strategies within our plan.

### **RAIL**

#### Key Strategy:

Preserve and rehabilitate all surviving rail infrastructure in the Adirondacks, including the Adirondack railroad from Remsen to Lake Placid.

#### The Key to its Importance:

Transportation is essential to economic prosperity, particularly in the Adirondacks where infrastructure and options are already severely limited. Rail holds, for much of the region, the only alternative to cars and trucks over two-lane roads, and it will become increasingly important in terms of energy efficient movement and access for both people and commerce. It remains a key ingredient in diminishing economic isolation and fostering economic development.

### **SMALL BUSINESS**

#### Key Strategy:

Foster development of small business and entrepreneurial activities. (A-1, B-2, B-3, A-2)

#### 2012 Refinement:

The following New Strategy statement has been added: Recognize the importance of community and regional planning in achieving the Council's vision.

#### The Key to Its Importance:

Small business is important everywhere in the state, but especially so in the North Country due to its rural character, the absence of a metro center, its dependence on small communities and the even smaller—often micro—nature of its business community in general. Effective strategies and actions in support of existing small businesses and of new entrepreneurs and start-ups is therefore key to overall economic progress in the North Country. The new strategy above reflects the reality that sound community and Regional planning is especially important to serving this dispersed and diverse sector in our vast region.

### **TOURISM**

#### Key Strategy:

Put tools in place to attract private investment in tourism which will drive demand to revitalize and diversify communities and create a climate that will

allow entrepreneurs to flourish. (A-1, B-4, B-5, B-7, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5)

#### The Key to its Importance:

The importance of tourism in our region is clear. However, the importance of this strategy is that it recognizes and focuses attention on the need to attract and foster development in attractions, facilities and infrastructure conducive to 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism. It remains the clear key to sustaining, spreading and maximizing the North Country's tourism sector.

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

#### Key Strategy:

Develop a strong workforce development system to support the needs of employers in the targeted clusters using a combination of new and incumbent worker training including flexible on-the-job training, certificate programs, apprenticeships, degree programs and recruitment assistance. (B-3)

#### 2012 Refinement:

This strategy was slightly reworded to be more inclusive of the training approaches required to meet our current and future aims, specifically adding references to apprenticeships and on-the-job training.

#### The Key to its Importance:

The availability of a ready workforce, whether trained or prepared to be trained, along with a responsive, flexible and multi-faceted workforce development support system, is indispensable to all of our other strategies, from supporting the changing needs of existing employers to successfully attracting new ones. It remains absolutely vital.



